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July 29, 1890.

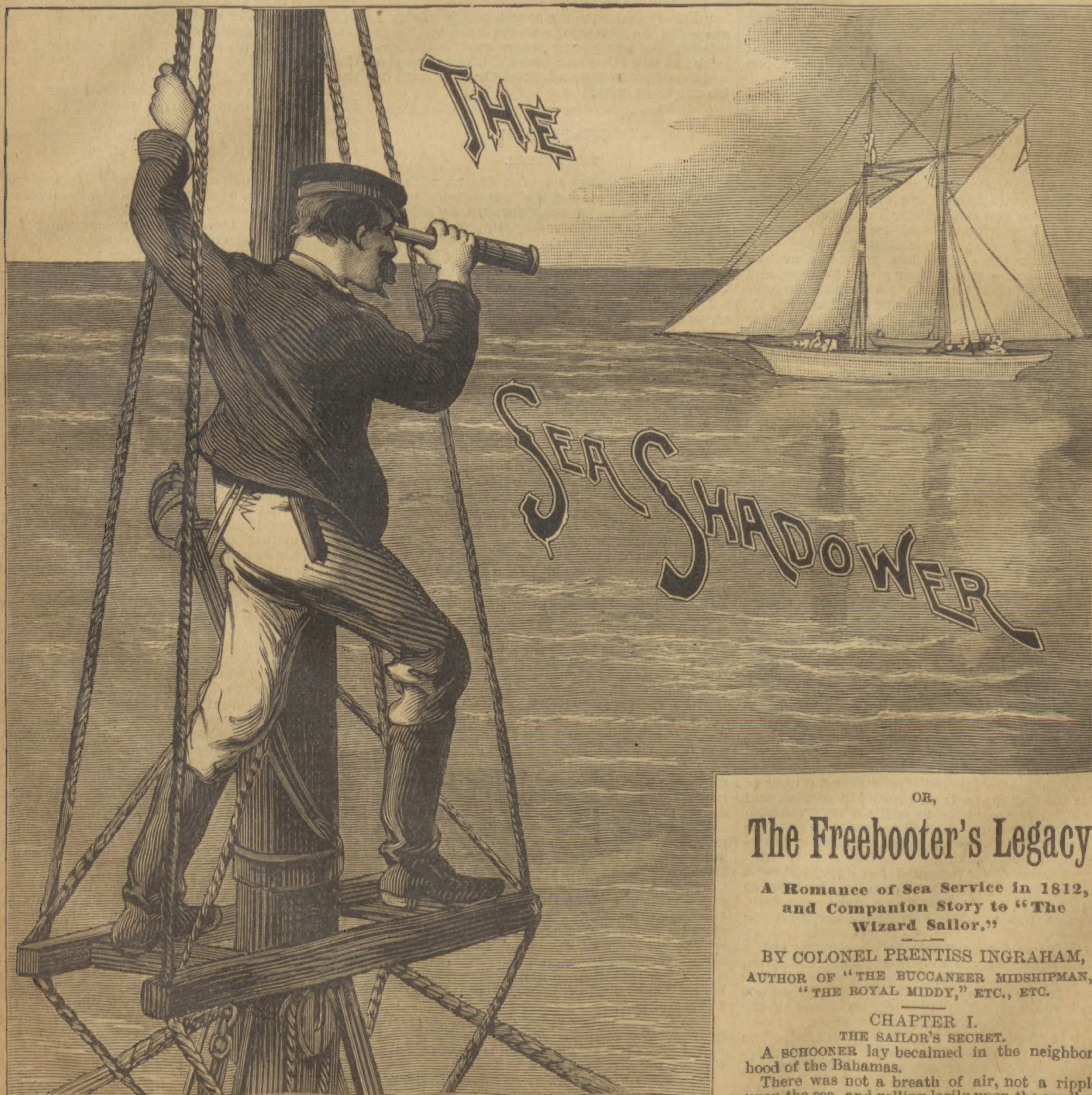
No. 679.

\$2.50
a Year.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY BEADLE AND ADAMS.
No. 98 WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK.

Price,
5 Cents.

Vol. XXVII.



"A SHADOW SHIP AND A SHADOW CREW!" CRIED THE PIRATE IN DISMAY.

OR,

The Freebooter's Legacy.

A Romance of Sea Service in 1812,
and Companion Story to "The
Wizard Sailor."

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE BUCCANEER MIDSHIPMAN,"
"THE ROYAL MIDDY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE SAILOR'S SECRET.

A SCHOONER lay becalmed in the neighbor-
hood of the Bahamas.

There was not a breath of air, not a ripple
upon the sea, and rolling lazily upon the swell of
the ocean the pretty craft, for she was trim as

well as stanch-looking, rose and fell with the heaving of the deep.

Upon her decks few men were visible, and these, a dozen in number, were grouped forward talking together in low, earnest tones, and with expressions upon their faces which would have alarmed an officer had he been on deck.

But all officers, taking advantage of the dead calm, were below at dinner.

The schooner was not armed, which was a strange circumstance for that locality of the sea, always the haunt of sea-rovers at the time of which I write, just at the breaking out of the last war with England, in 1812.

The craft also did not seem to carry a heavy cargo, looking light as though in ballast, yet having the air of a vessel that might readily become dangerous.

In the cabin sat three officers, the captain and the first and second mates, and an observer would have been at once struck by their youth, for the eldest appeared to be scarcely over twenty-two or three.

He was the captain, and yet he wore nothing more than a handsome sailor-suit, as far as any designation of his rank was concerned.

His face was a study for an ideal of perfect manly beauty, as was his form for the perfection of manhood, and there was that in his dark, intelligent, daring countenance to win regard and affection.

His two mates were handsome, dashing young fellows, with golden hair and blue eyes, and their resemblance to each other showed that they stood in the relationship of brothers, one being some two years older than the other.

They also were dressed in sailor costume, and yet wore no designation of rank.

The three officers were armed with cutlass and pistols, and were enjoying their coffee after a hearty dinner.

At last the handsome young skipper said, and his voice became serious at once:

"Clarence, I do not for a moment blame you for the men you shipped, for I well know that on the eve of war it was hard to secure first-class seamen in Boston; so understand I put it just as it is—that these men are going to mutiny simply because it is in their power to do so, and their belief that they can gain a large amount of gold in doing so and getting rid of us."

"But, Captain Sweegan, they believe your story to them of having treasure on board, and so mean to take it," said Harvey Lynn, the first mate of the schooner.

Captain Clifford Sweegan laughed, showing as he did so his even, milk-white teeth.

Then he replied:

"Let me tell you first why I told them that story about my having treasure on board, and coming to the Bahamas, to hide it on an island until I could return in an armed vessel and get it, and hold it with safety."

"I asked you, Clarence, to get me this schooner and a crew on a charter for a couple of months. Your brother, Harvey, here, accompanied me on my run to the Kennebec in my little sloop, where I went to lay the keel of a fleet craft which I am to make into an American privateer."

"Now I wish to say that neither of you know more of me than that I live in an old haunted house in Overlook Cliff, in the harbor of M—, and where my mother and sister now are."

"Apparently just because we are unknown, have money, and dress to suit our fancy, people at M— call my mother a sorceress, and me a Wizard Sailor."

"I will not go into the past more than to say that we are what you might call Sea Gypsies, for we have roamed about for years in our little sloop, until we settled at M—; but, some years ago, I was so fortunate as to save a cruiser of the United States from capture by pirates, and enabled her captain to make a very valuable capture in return—for which service he gave me letters that gained for me a berth as a midshipman, to report at will."

"I have never reported for duty, but see a chance now to win fame in the coming war, so determined to go in my own vessel as captain, though but a middy, and have her for a privateer."

"To pay for my vessel, and her fitting out, I determined to use a legacy which, I suppose, comes upon my sister Kate and myself. How we got it, or anything else about it, I need not tell you, but it is hidden on an island of the Bahamas, and has been there for years."

"In fact, I was a small boy when I helped to bury the treasure there; but I know it is more than enough to fit out a vessel-of-war, and I consider it the best means to put it to."

"My mother and my sister agree with me;

and so, after ordering the schooner built, I chartered this craft, and am going in search of my buried legacy."

"Feeling a doubt of these men, I decided to put them to the test *before* I got the treasure on board, so told them the story I did about having a large sum on board now."

"They at once began to show the cloven foot; and, as the one man I trusted among the dozen is true, he has reported that they intend to mutiny to-night, seize the schooner and, as they believe, the treasure with it."

"I shall take the deck to-night, and you, though supposed to have turned in, must be on the watch, and when they make the attack, be on hand to help me."

"The man I trust will just make four of us against eleven; but we must give them a surprise by being prepared for them, and we can soon thin the number down to nearly even."

"If we get out of the affair all right, and we must do so, we will then go on to the treasure island and secure what I came after, and before two months we will be afloat as officers of as fleet and well-armed a craft as sails the seas."

"Now, Harvey, let me suggest to you and to Clarence to doubly arm yourselves, and keep ready for my call for help, and throw no shot away."

"Don't kill Caspar Capoul, for he is my spy, and as true as steel."

"Now you know my secret, and just why I am going on this cruise to the Bahamas," and leaving his two young mates very much surprised at what they had heard, Clifford Sweegan went on deck to have a look at the ugly faces of his mutinous crew."

CHAPTER II.

THE MUTINY.

THERE was a prospect of a breeze, with the coming on of night, and the men had decided to act—that is, seize the schooner, kill the officers, and divide the treasure they supposed to be on board.

Clifford Sweegan had acted wisely in standing the result of a mutiny before he had his treasure on board, rather than afterward.

If the men believed there were riches in the cabin of the schooner, and mutinied, they would certainly have done so after he had visited the island and taken them on board.

About those same riches the young captain had given no hint to his two officers as to how he knew that they were there, other than that, as a boy, he had aided in burying them on the island.

Where they had come from he had said nothing.

Harvey and Clarence Lynn were the sons of a rich Boston shipping merchant, and both of them had had a sea training, and were dashing, whole-souled young men, who would be only too glad to serve their country in the threatening war with England.

One night, when on a wreck, and after they had given up all hope of life, a sloop had come in sight, run down to their rescue, and at the risk of the lives of the two on board, had saved those on the wreck, there being others besides Harvey Lynn and his brother.

There were but two on the little sloop, and they were Clifford Sweegan and his pretty sister Kate, a young girl only a year or two in her teens.

Since then the two young men had been devoted admirers of Clifford and his sister, yet had wondered at their being so wholly unknown and what mystery it was that hung over their past lives, while they stood in awe of their mother, a woman about whom there seemed to hang a weird, awe-inspiring something which caused her to be dreaded.

When Clifford decided to build and fit out a privateer, paying for her with the money gained from the sale of the treasure then on the Bahama Isle, he had thought of Harvey and Clarence as his allies, and while the former had sailed with himself and sister in the little sloop to the Kennebec, to begin the good work of starting his vessel, Clarence had chartered a small schooner and shipped a crew for the run after the riches.

So it was that Clifford had felt a suspicion that his crew were not to be trusted and had put them to the test.

As darkness was creeping over the sea, and a breeze began to fill the sails, the young captain called the men to duty and ordered Caspar Capoul, the spy, to take the wheel.

As the sailor came aft he said in a low tone:

"Be ready, sir, for they intend to act now. I

was ordered to kill you as they came body."

"All right, Capoul. Just kill the man who gave you the order instead. I am ready, and my officers await my signal, so we must hold the ship."

"It's big odds against us, sir, but we can try."

"Why, our first fire will bring their numbers to but two to one, and a rush on our part will quickly even matters so that we need have no fear. When they come aft do you leave the wheel and in the companionway will find a musket, pistol and cutlass, while you already have a pistol, I believe."

"Yes, sir," and the man could but admire the coolness of his young captain who stood upon the brink of a terrible volcano as it were.

"There they come, sir!" he whispered, a moment after, as the eleven men started aft in a group.

Clifford passed by the companionway and said quietly:

"Ready below there!"

"Ay ay, sir," came the response of Harvey Lynn.

Then turning to the men Clifford called out: "Well, men, what do you want coming aft here in force?"

"We want your life and your riches, captain, and we'll take them," was the answer, and the sailor sprung forward drawing a cutlass from beneath his blouse as he did so.

But a shot from an unexpected quarter, from Caspar Capoul at the wheel, and the leader of the mutineers dropped dead.

At the same instant Clifford Sweegan fired his pistol, a double-barrel weapon, into the crowd, and grasping his cutlass sprung forward and with a mighty sweep of his powerful arm cut down a third man, for one of his shots had also been fatal.

Out of the cabin there sprung Harvey and Clarence Lynn, a pistol in one hand, a cutlass in the other, while Caspar Capoul rushed to where arms had been placed for him, and followed in the wake of the two young officers.

"Thus in an instant of time three of the mutineers had fallen, and the others found rushing upon them four well-armed men."

Their leader was dead, and they were stunned with surprise, so that the smaller force held the advantage and used it, for they were cool and determined, and they were not to be defeated.

Other shots rung out, the cutlasses rung as they struck other blades and boarding-pikes, and for a minute it seemed doubtful as to which side would win.

But Clifford Sweegan was no novice in a combat on a vessel's deck, he had been in scenes of carnage before, and his mad rush carried all before him, ably seconded as he was by his two officers and the faithful sailor Capoul.

Seeing that their force of twelve had dwindled, by the desertion of Capoul, the death of four and wounding of three more down to equal numbers, and not one of the schooner's defenders had fallen, the mutineers turned and fled, lustily crying for quarter.

One by one they were called aft and ironed, and then the wounded were cared for.

As Capoul and Harvey Lynn were also wounded, though slightly, one of the mutineers was released from his irons and forced to aid in the working of the vessel, which continued on in her search for the Treasure Island.

But after several days as the island was not discovered, the young captain, fearing tornadoes in that latitude, and with the small crew unable to do more than work the vessel, decided to return home, leaving the securing of the treasure to a more fitting time.

Thus the schooner was headed northward, and only four men were able to do duty upon her decks.

CHAPTER III.

THE SMUGGLER'S WIFE.

A STRANGE scene it was, a boat drifting about upon the boundless sea and in it two occupants, a woman and a young girl.

The boat was a stanch life-skiff, with a stump mast and leg-of-mutton sail. At the helm sat a girl scarcely fifteen, with a face of rare beauty, though now it was pale with dread.

She was dressed in a pretty sailor suit, of short skirt, blouse waist and hood collar, and wore upon her head a Turkish fez cap of scarlet, with a golden band.

Lying upon a couple of boards laid across the seats, and made comfortable with wraps and blankets, was a woman of twenty-five or six.

form was slender and graceful, and her face beautiful, though touchingly sad.

Now it was wan and flushed with fever, and she tossed uneasily to and fro, as if in pain.

The little skiff was held on its way, except when the girl at the helm left her duty to serve her companion in some way.

A basket of provisions was amidships, and a pistol lay upon a seat forward.

"My sweet young friend, I fear that we are doomed," said the woman, opening her eyes after a long silence, and turning them upon the young girl, who promptly answered:

"Not a bit of it, for I never give up, and though you are ill, you will soon be well."

"Well, and adrift in a boat at sea—we two."

"The land cannot be far away, and besides we have a chance of being picked up by some vessel."

"Oh, it is by no means a hopeless outlook," and the young girl's pluck caused the woman to respond:

"You are brave and hopeful; but I was once so too."

"When a young girl, left with my dearly loved brother to the guardianship of one whom our parents trusted, I found him false to us both, for to get our inheritance he forced me into a secret marriage with him, then took my brother's life, and fearing discovery fled with me from place to place, until he became a smuggler, hiding upon the rocky coast where you were brought."

"Yes, and when I awakened you to the fact that my kidnappers who brought me there meant to rob my mother of gold for my ransom, you determined to aid my escape, and we did get away, while you avenged your brother's death, and your own cruel treatment at the hands of your brutish husband, by taking his life when he forced you to do so."

"We escaped, and we are here now, so do not despair, for you can find a home with us, as my mother and brother will gladly welcome you."

"Now don't get blue, Mrs. Henshaw, but keep up a stout heart."

But the brave girl spoke not from her heart, as she saw that each moment the woman's fever was increasing, and that the prospect ahead was all else than hopeful.

As night came on the woman grew delirious, and tossed wildly about until the girl feared she would throw herself from the boat.

But, she still held on her course, as best she could, hoping to sight land, or at least run into the pathway of some vessels bound into or out of the port of Boston.

Two days after, when the dawn came, it revealed a storm about to break, and in her despair the young girl saw not, astern, a schooner coming swiftly along in chase.

Had she seen the vessel, she would hardly have believed it an escape to be taken on board, for at her peak floated the black flag of the pirate, while her decks were crowded with a motley crew of evil-faced men.

She was a handsome schooner, clean-cut, trimly rigged and well armed, and about her was an air of man-of-war discipline.

When near the little skiff an officer bailed, the fair helmswoman was ordered to come alongside, when the schooner lay to and the poor invalid and her girl companion were soon after in the cabin.

The sick woman was made comfortable in one of the state-rooms, which was hastily fitted up for her reception, and the schooner's surgeon was ordered to take her in charge.

After the young girl had rested and made herself more presentable, she again met the captain of the schooner, who thus far had been extremely courteous and kind toward the two unfortunates.

He was a man of forty-four or five, with a face which long exposure to the sea had bronzed darkly, and waving manes of hair fell upon his shoulders.

A long, dark mustache shaded his mouth, which was cynical and cruel, and his eyes, large and black, had a world of fascination in them.

His fine form was clad in an elegant uniform, and his whole appearance of elegance chimed in with the luxury of his surroundings.

"You said your name was Kate Sweegan, and that you recalled having met me before, but did not remember when and where, but that my face came back to you from the past like an evil dream."

"Do you recall me now?" and the schooner's captain gazed fixedly into the face of the young girl before him, and spoke in a strangely soft and tender manner.

"No, sir, I only feel in my heart that we have met before; but then, I am a Sea Gypsy,

and have been quite a wanderer, young as I am, and so may have met you in some of the ports we have visited."

"And who are we?"

"My mother, my brother Clifford and myself."

"Ah! and you are Sea Gypsies?"

"Yes, sir; so people call us."

"You wander about from port to port, you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"And why?"

"Because mother has so willed it."

"And how is it I find you at sea in an open boat, and with one who is not your mother?"

"I was kidnapped from my home, sir, and carried to a rocky cliff to be held prisoner by a smuggler, until my mother paid a large ransom for me."

"The smuggler had his wife with him, the poor woman now with me, and whom he had robbed and cruelly treated."

"I suggested that she escape with me, and she did so, after having been forced to kill the smuggler to save her own life."

"We put to sea to escape from a smack coming to the smuggler's retreat, and when dawn came were out of sight of land, and the poor woman was taken ill, and you have saved us from death, for the storm would have swamped us."

"And happy am I to have saved you, for—do you know who the original of this miniature is?" and he handed her a diamond-studded miniature.

"Oh, sir, it is my mother!"

"Yes, and you are my child, for I am Basil, the Buccaneer," was the startling response.

CHAPTER IV.

A SEA TRAP.

A GROUP of men-of-war boats were upon the sea, far from land, with clouds obscuring the skies, a heavy sea running and the prospect of the weather becoming worse and worse.

A good ship flying the United States flag, after a hard-fought battle with a powerful foe, had been found to be leaking so badly that her crew, wounded and unharmed, were compelled to take to their boats, as a slim chance of saving their lives.

Their gallant commander cheered all by his hopefulness and pluck, and though days had passed, and a storm seemed about to break upon them, though provisions and water were running low, and the men, especially the wounded, began to suffer, Captain Chester Chadwick never lost his nerve or his hope of rescue.

"Sail, ho!"

The cry caused a thrill to run through every man in the little flotilla of boats, and all eyes were turned upon a distant sail.

Nearer and nearer it came, and it had changed its course and was heading for them, a fact that caused cheer after cheer to break from the lips of the now happy men.

Signaling to his boats to come near, Captain Chadwick said:

"Men, yonder craft has a very saucy look, and should she prove to be an English privateer, or a pirate, then we must carry her by boarding, and thus we can get a new vessel."

"Look to your arms!"

The men knew their captain and obeyed, and preparations were hastily made to carry out his orders.

The schooner meanwhile was seen to be under shortened sail, and upon her decks less than half a dozen men were visible, while no ports were to be seen.

As she drew near, in answer to the flags floating at the stern of the boats, she sent up the Stars and Stripes, a fact that brought a cheer from the shipwrecked crew.

Half an hour after the schooner hove to and Captain Chadwick and his men were saved.

"Captain Chadwick! how glad I am, sir," and the young commander of the schooner stepped forward and grasped the hand of the shipwrecked commander.

A long glance into the face of the young captain of the schooner and Captain Chadwick said:

"Yes, your face is not one to forget, and though you have grown to manhood since I saw you last, I recall you as the gallant youth who saved my vessel from the pirates, and led us to attack their retreat and capture it."

"You are the young Gypsy Rover, Clifford Sweegan?"

"Yes, Captain Chadwick, and happy I am to again be of service to you, sir, and you, your officers and men must look upon my schooner as your own."

The captain then presented his officers, all of

whom were given quarters in the cabin, as all the rest of the space on the little schooner would be needed for the four-score rescued men, one-fourth of which number were wounded.

"But you were given a midshipman's warrant, my young friend," said Captain Chadwick as the two stood on the deck together, after the officers and men had been placed.

"True, sir, and I hold it to-day, with orders to report at will, and I will now tell you why you find me here working this schooner with my two officers and one seaman, with the others in irons," and Clifford Sweegan told his story, and that he had hoped to pay for his schooner, then building with what he got on the island.

"Well, you'll get your vessel, never fear, though you could not find your treasure, my young friend," was the reply of Captain Chadwick.

Some ten days after the lookout aloft called out:

"Sail ho!"

The stranger was soon made out to be an armed schooner, and was seen to be in chase.

"We are in a bad fix, Captain Sweegan, without a gun, for that fellow is, I believe, the pirate Basil," said Captain Chadwick.

The face of the youth changed color, flushing crimson, and then turning deadly pale.

For some minutes or more he made no reply, and then turning to the naval officer said almost sharply:

"I shall capture that pirate, sir, with your aid."

"Command me, for this is your vessel."

"No, no, sir; you do not understand me."

"You say that it is Basil the Buccaneer?"

"I am sure of it."

"He is in chase, and he has a fleet, strong vessel, heavily armed and well manned."

"He has."

"This schooner is also fleet, and might escape, as night is coming on; but you have some seventy-five men on board, counting your officers and wounded men, and I have, with my two officers and faithful seaman Capoul, five more."

"Then there are five more in irons, who, if they will do their duty now, I will pardon for their mutiny."

"We can send all below but a working crew, and when Basil boards, expecting to capture a merchant craft, we will have just eighty-five well-armed, gallant tars to throw upon him and take his vessel."

"Just like you, my brave boy, so command me and my crew."

"Oh, no, sir, you are to take command."

"Not I, so do not urge it; but I will work your vessel with a small crew, and let you arrange and lead your fighting force, while I can, with those I have charge of, aid as a reserve."

Thus urged, Clifford Sweegan called to Harvey and Clarence Lynn, and bade them release the mutineers, if they would aid in defending the schooner, and then come on deck and obey Captain Chadwick's orders.

He meanwhile called the man-of-war's crew below and told them his plan, and all were ready for the work to be done.

The officers and men, who were glad to obey their gallant rescuer and the bold plotters to seize the pursuing craft, were then fully armed and stationed in three separate forces in different parts of the vessel below decks, ready to obey the word of command, while Captain Chadwick, Harvey Lynn, and his brother and the released mutineers worked the schooner.

The pursuer was now in full chase, not half a league astern, and as darkness came on she opened fire.

Though pretending to do all in his power to escape, Captain Chadwick had dropped overboard two spars, and towing them, they retarded the speed of the flying craft.

The fire of the schooner was wild at first, but soon a good range was obtained, and a shot would cut through the canvas and now and then cut along the decks, but no material damage had been done, and the plucky schooner held on her way.

It was a chase for hours, and not until the pursuer drew near enough to really damage the little schooner did Captain Chadwick come to and say:

"Now, Captain Sweegan, the vessel is in your hands."

CHAPTER V.

THE FREEBOOTER'S LEGACY.

WHEN Basil the Buccaneer made the assertion that the beautiful young girl whom he had picked up at sea adrift in a boat with the smuggler's unfortunate wife was his own

daughter, he gazed with a strange look—one hard to fathom—upon the innocent face before him.

Kate started at his words, and looked upon his handsome face with a look that seemed to read his very soul.

At last she said:

"I was a little girl then, when I saw you last, but I recall your face now perfectly, for my brother has a miniature of you, taken when you were a younger man, and I see that you are Basil the Buccaneer."

"And your father?"

"A pirate father! Have I aught to be proud of?" said Kate, with scorn in look and tone.

The man flinched, and replied:

"You condemn me, for, as Basil the Buccaneer, I am deemed to be a monster, and yet heed not what forced me to become a pirate."

"I judge you from the fact, that under the guise of an honorable man, you won my mother's love, for she believed you a commander in the navy of Columbia."

"She fled with you and became the wife of a pirate, and upon the deck over which waved the black flag, my brother and I dwelt for years. He was made by you a buccaneer midshipman, while I was to be reared as the daughter of Basil the freebooter."

"But a happy circumstance parted you from my mother, my brother and myself, and I feel only shame now to meet again the man whose name is dreaded as Basil the Buccaneer and have him call me his child."

In vain did the outlaw chief try to hide how deeply her words cut him, for he could but show that he felt them, and keenly.

After a moment he said:

"The happy circumstance which you say separated us was that I mistook an armed vessel in the night for a merchantman, and boarding her with my crew just as a storm broke, the two craft were torn apart, and while I was left with my men fighting terrible odds for our lives, my schooner with a dozen men left on board of her, your mother, your brother and yourself, drove away before the gale to safety."

"I was forced to yield, after most of my men had fallen, and but for the fact that I was aided to escape I would have been hanged."

"What became of my vessel, my wife and children, I do not to this day know."

"Perhaps you can explain?"

"Yes, your men left on board meant to put your wife and children to death and then rob the schooner of her treasure; but my brother overheard the plot, and while they were drunk below surprised them there, and we three escaped in the life-boat, to land upon an island, where the next night, in a storm, the schooner was driven with her drunken crew."

"She became a wreck, and not one of them escaped death."

"And the treasure?" quickly asked Basil the Buccaneer.

"The schooner became a perfect wreck, I said."

"And you were not able to save the treasure?"

"I was a little child, and my brother not more than in his teens, and the third one of us was a woman, as you know, so how could we three save a treasure from a wrecked vessel?"

"Girl, you dodge my question."

"I asked you was the treasure on board my schooner saved?"

"Ask my mother."

"Where is she?"

"That I shall never tell you when I know that for long years she had hidden from you, knowing of your escape from the yard-arm."

"How did you escape from the island?"

"In the life-boat, which brother Clifford managed well, for under your training he was a most expert seaman, though but a boy."

"And what have the three of you done since?"

"Been Sea Gypsies, for we have wandered at will."

"And where is your brother now?"

"His home is with our mother."

"And you refuse to tell me where your mother is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why?"

"If she has hidden from you she has had some good cause doubtless, and I will not betray her."

"Her cause has been to keep me from getting my treasure."

"She surely has no treasure in her keeping, nor did she bring from the island more than what she took from the schooner when we left in the life-boat."

"And where is the island where the schooner was wrecked?"

"I neither know its latitude or longitude."

"You mean that you will not tell?"

"If I did I would not tell; but I do not know."

The buccaneer was evidently in ill-humor.

He had met more than his match in the girl whom he called his daughter, and, fretted more than he cared to admit, he at last decided to use threats, so said:

"I can force you to tell me the truth if I will."

"Therein you do not know me, to believe so, for I am not one to be driven by fear or threats, Captain Basil," was the plucky reply.

"Very well, I was not in earnest; but I have loved your mother always, and longed to see her once again."

"Perhaps I could put it more truthfully, sir, by saying that you love your treasure more and long to find it through her."

The chief muttered an oath between his teeth and turned away.

After a short silence he said pleasantly:

"Well, Kate, you are my child, and as such you shall have a warm place in my heart, and this schooner is your home as long as you please to remain upon her, you and the one who is now so ill, but whom my surgeon tells me will recover, for the crisis has passed."

"When she is able to leave the vessel, I will land you both at any point you may designate, and I hope that you may be the cause of visiting your mother and myself once more, for I will gladly give up this life of evil I lead, to have a home and those about me I love."

"If I could believe you, I would indeed be glad," said Kate with some feeling, and the reply came earnestly:

"You can believe me," and the buccaneer turned away and left the cabin, while from his lips came the muttered words:

"She shall be made to tell me where her mother is, or her brother, for through them alone can I regain my lost treasure."

"Yes, I will break down her spirit and force the truth from her, for she and her brother shall not live in luxury through the legacy which cruel fortune has forced me to leave to them."

CHAPTER VI.

A DOVE WITH TALONS.

BAZIL the Buccaneer certainly did all in his power to make the stay on board his vessel of Kate and Mrs. Henshaw, as comfortable as possible.

He seemed to avoid any action, or the firing of a gun, and besides he made his surgeon devote himself to the care of the invalid, who also had Kate's good nursing to help her get well.

Kate kept out of the way of Basil all that she could.

She recognized his kind acts, and did not wish to anger him, and when asked where he should land them, she named a small port on the coast of North Carolina, wishing to make Basil believe thereby that her mother dwelt in that neighborhood.

As Mrs. Henshaw was still too ill to be removed there was nothing for them to do but remain on the schooner for the present, for that Basil the Buccaneer intended to force from her the secret of her mother's hiding-place Kate did not believe.

She knew that he was wicked, a pirate, and sought to find his lost treasure, but that he would be so cruel as to place her in a position where she must tell upon her mother, she had not believed.

But upon this score she was undeceived when at last Mrs. Henshaw said that she was able to be removed from the schooner to the land.

The chief asked the surgeon's opinion and he said that there would be no danger in the removal.

Then Basil told Kate that he wished to have a talk with her.

"Mrs. Henshaw saved your life, I believe?"

"She saved me from the power of smugglers, and just what they want to do with me I do not know," was the reply.

"You are very much attached to her, I believe?"

"Yes, for she aided me, as I said, to escape, and in doing so she was forced to take the life of her smuggler husband."

"Then we were adrift together in the little boat, and I have done all I could to nurse her back to life, and now I am deeply attached to her."

"Well, my child, I have just this to say, and that is, unless you tell me where I can find my lost treasure, or not knowing, let me know the

retreat of your mother, or brother, or both, shall land you, as I promised, upon the Carolina coast, while your friend Mrs. Henshaw remains on board this schooner."

"Do you mean this outrage?"

"I do."

"Keep me as your prisoner and let her go free."

"No, I shall retain her on board my vessel."

"I refuse to tell you then, and I will not leave her here, but remain with her."

"But you shall do as I say."

Before another reply could be made by Kate Mrs. Henshaw came slowly into the cabin from her state-room.

"My child, do not yield, but leave me here, and go your way, for life holds for me no charm," she said.

"No, I will not leave you here and I will not betray my mother's secret."

"Sail ho!"

The chief seemed not to heed the hail from aloft, until some words uttered by one of his officers caused him to rise and go on deck, while he said:

"I will see you soon, and you must yield to my terms, girl."

Upon reaching the deck, a schooner was discovered in sight, which the buccaneer lieutenant said he believed was a United States Government dispatch boat, and he added:

"You know, sir, they carry large sums in gold to pay off troops on the Southern Coast."

"Yes, and they are fleet as a bird, and have but a small crew, depending upon their speed to escape a pursuer."

"But the Red Scorpion can catch her, so put away in chase under all sail."

So the pirate schooner was crowded with canvas and went flying along in chase of the stranger, which was seen to be a small, rakish-looking craft, that bowled along at a very rapid pace.

The buccaneer craft, however, was very fleet, and began to pick up her chase at the rate of a quarter of a mile to the hour, and when darkness came on was little over a league and a half astern.

So occupied was Captain Basil in the chase that he had not returned to the cabin, and there sat the two captives, Kate and Mrs. Henshaw, for they were nothing more, wondering what the result would be of the young girl's bold stand against the chief upon his own vessel.

When the pirate opened fire upon the chase, Mrs. Henshaw shuddered and clung to Kate, who was perfectly cool, and in no way alarmed.

Thus the hours passed away, the sympathy of Kate and Mrs. Henshaw with the brave little craft, which still held in under the hot fire of her big pursuer, and yet must soon fall a prey to her enemy.

In the mean time the two vessels were still flying along, the schooner ahead seeming to use every endeavor to escape, while the pursuer was equally as determined to capture her.

"That craft has some motive in running on as she does under our hot fire, and I believe we are to capture a valuable prize," said the lieutenant, addressing his chief.

"Yes, I hope so; but years ago I once pursued a brig under like circumstances, and found her to be an armed craft, and so I lost my vessel, and very nearly my life."

"But yonder craft is not armed, sir."

"No, I made sure of that when I went aloft with my glass this afternoon; it is no dove with talons."

"The brig we saw by night, and she had her guns hidden under canvas, while, as she ran we certainly supposed her unarmed, for she was larger than my craft."

"No, we have a prize in this craft, I am sure," and the chief again turned his glass upon the chase, now not over a quarter of a mile ahead.

As a well-aimed shot now tore along the decks of the chase, and the pursuer was seen to yaw from her course as though for a broadside, the little schooner swept up into the wind and lay to.

Then sail was taken in rapidly on the pirate, until she was under mainsail, foresail and jib only, and sweeping to the lee of the chase she glided up alongside and Captain Basil, with a helmet on his head, cutlass in one hand and pistol in the other, stood ready in the bulwarks to spring on board.

"Boarders follow me!" he called out as he leaped upon the decks of the chase and the grapples were thrown.

But grapples were also thrown from the smaller schooner, and at the same instant from fore-hatch, ward-room and cabin burst forth

Streams of fire, and three-score muskets poured a leaden hail upon the crew of the pirate.

At the next instant came the loud command: "Up and at them, American tars!"

The surprise, with the withering fire of the Americans, completely stunned the buccaneers, and it was some seconds even before their desperate chief seemed to gain his nerve.

And in this time the tars of the little schooner, headed by Clifford Sweegan, were upon their foes, firing upon them with their pistols and cutting them down with their blades.

Seeing that it was death or victory for him, Captain Basil sprang to the front and did a giant's work, fighting like a hero, pirate though he was, until suddenly he crossed the blade of one who had struggled forward to meet him.

"Now, Basil, the Buccaneer, it is your life, or mine, for I have a wronged woman to avenge!" and the young sailor crossed blades with the man whom he had been taught in boyhood to call by the sacred name of father.

CHAPTER VII.

STRANGELY MET.

IN his own luxuriously-furnished cabin lay Basil, the Buccaneer, desperately wounded, for his surgeon had said that he must die.

In that cabin had been found Kate and Mrs. Henshaw. The story of his sister's capture and escape had been heard by the gallant young captor of the pirate vessel, and a glad surprise it was for the maiden to find in the victor her own brother.

The pirates had fought desperately, under the leadership of their truly brave chief, until he had fallen under the attack of the young sailor, and then with no leader and their ranks decimated they had cried for quarter.

"I owe this victory to you, Captain Chadwick, to you and your brave officers and men," Clifford had said, earnestly, when the sable ensign had been hauled down from over the deck of the pirate prize.

"My dear boy, we were but instruments in your hands, for we would never have thought of resisting an armed craft, but for you."

"No, you won the fight," replied the captain.

"With the splendid material I had to work with, sir, and as you are without a vessel I hereby give to you this schooner and her armament, with all on board, so that you are afloat again upon an armed deck."

"Not so fast, my brave young friend, but let me tell you what I will do."

"Yes, sir."

"I will take the vessel as a prize, to be held as such, and the valuation to be paid out in appropriate portions to you as captain, your officers as lieutenants, and your one faithful man as boatswain, with my officers and men to receive also their shares, while I, of course, have command of the schooner in place of the one I lost, and I can ask no more."

"As for those mutineers, they get their lives, and no more could they ask, for I believe they would have been glad to turn against us, had they seen the tide set that way."

"Now I will go on board of the prize with my crew, excepting those you may need to work your vessel, and the wounded I will take with me, and the prisoners, so that your sweet sister and her friend need have nothing on your vessel to disturb them."

"When you reach port, should we become separated, send my men to the navy yard in Boston, where I will go for repairs."

"On the way to port I will take a careful inventory of all the pirates may have on board in the way of booty, the value of which will be put in with that of the schooner and her armament."

As Captain Chadwick was determined to have his way about the disposition of the prize, Clifford Sweegan could but yield, and so stated that the loan of a dozen men would be acceptable to him, after his vessel had been repaired, for she had really suffered under the fire of the pirate.

The buccaneer chief had been carried into his own cabin, where Captain Chadwick said that he should remain, and as his surgeon told him that his wound was fatal, he asked to have Clifford Sweegan sent for.

The young sailor left Harvey Lynn to look after the repairs upon the schooner, and rowed over in his gig on board the pirate vessel.

The chief lay upon a lounge, his head resting upon red silk cushions, which presented a striking contrast to his pale face.

"Surgeon, I would be alone with this gentleman," he said, addressing his own surgeon, who,

of all the pirate crew, had been left free from irons to look after the wounded, as only one surgeon was with Captain Chadwick's crew.

When alone, Captain Basil said, in a low tone:

"Well, sir, I shall escape the gallows, but I owe my death-wound to my own son."

"No, you should not have a falsehood upon your lips with Death's grip upon you."

"What do you mean?"

"If you die, I will have taken your life, yes; but I am not your son."

"Not my son?"

"No more than is Kate your daughter."

"I do not understand you!"

"Yes, you do, for I will not be cursed by the memory that I am a pirate's son, when I know that you are not my father."

"Were you such, bad as you are, I would not deny my parentage."

"But I know the whole truth, Captain Basil, of how you ran off with my mother, for so I will call her, and that she is childless, but adopted two children, a boy and girl, alone found alive on a wreck driven ashore on the Cuban Coast, where, when ashore, you lived, a pretended planter."

"You adopted us as your children, and reared us upon the deck of your pirate craft, I being a buccaneer midgy; but a fortunate circumstance divided our lives, and I know now the whole truth, that neither Kate or I are your children."

"Have you more to say to me?"

"No, for I dare not deny now the truth of your words."

"But you will see your mother—my wife."

"I will of course see your wife, but not my mother, for though she has been such to Kate and I, still she is no more our mother than you are our father."

"Granted, for death is too near me now to argue with you."

"You will see my wife?"

"Yes."

"Then tell her from me that in dying my thoughts were with her, that when I sink into my grave in the sea depths, I will it that her miniature goes with me."

"And more, both you and she know where my treasure is, the treasure I had upon my wrecked schooner—do you not?"

"Granted that I do."

"Then take that, you and Kate, as my legacy, a freebooter's legacy though it be, for it can never be restored to its rightful owners."

"As for the little booty I have on this vessel it will doubtless be divided as prize money."

"It has already been arranged for, Captain Basil."

"But the other is my legacy to you and Kate, for I know that you will never allow my wife to suffer."

"Oh, no, and I accept the legacy, for my sister and myself, and I pledge you it will be devoted to a good use, thereby washing off the red stain upon it."

"Is there aught that I can do for you, Captain Basil?"

"Nothing, I thank you; but for the sake of the affection you held for me in your boyhood, when you believed me to be your father, and ere you knew how wicked piracy was, I ask you to grasp my hand in farewell, for I cannot expect you to remain until I am dead."

"No, my duties call me on board my vessel, which was badly cut up by your shots."

"You will win a name, Clifford—Kane, for I will call you by your own name now, for Sweegan was my middle name. Your mother, my wife rather, has a box of papers, taken from the wreck with you, to prove just who you and your sister are—to her say farewell for me, and now good-by."

The young sailor grasped his hand and said softly:

"May Heaven have mercy upon your soul."

Then he turned away and left the cabin, and a few hours after the two vessels were northward bound, Clifford Kane, as I must now call the young sailor, being happy in the grand capture he had made, and that in doing so he had rescued his loved sister and Mrs. Henshaw from an unknown fate.

CHAPTER VIII.

A CLEVER RUSE.

THE surgeon of the pirate schooner of Basil had reported to Captain Chadwick, after the surrender of the vessel, that he was a pirate by force of circumstances, and not by choice, he having been captured by the buccaneer upon a prize.

At that time, fortunately for Hugh Carrol, the surgeon, the services of a man of medicine and surgical knowledge was sadly needed on board the pirate schooner, and he had been glad to escape going into irons by rendering aid to the wounded and sick.

Since then no chance of escape had offered, and so the surgeon had remained by force on the buccaneer schooner.

As Captain Basil also vouched for it that the surgeon was not willingly a pirate, Captain Chadwick, who needed the valuable services of the man, gave him charge of his chief and a number of other wounded men, and felt confidence in him.

"How long do you think he will live, Surgeon Carrol?" asked Captain Chadwick, as the vessel sighted port.

"Perhaps several days longer, sir; maybe he may go at any moment."

"It is a pity to have a man with such a guilty soul die as a brave man, with a wound received in battle, and not at the end of a rope, as he deserves; but I would not be the one to strike him now he is down, nor utter an unkind word to him."

"Care for him all in your power, and there is no need of a guard for him, of course?"

"None, sir."

"And I will see to it that your papers are given you all right, setting you free when we reach port, and I have to thank you for your kindness to my wounded men, and your services to the wounded pirates as well," and turning to one of his officers, Captain Chadwick asked if anything had been seen of the little schooner, which had been lost sight of the night before in a gale.

"No, sir, we have not had a glimpse of her all the morning," responded the officer, who had relieved the captain from watch at dawn.

It was just sunset when the pirate schooner ran up Boston Bay, saluted the castle as she passed, and dropped anchor in a secluded part of the harbor.

Then Captain Chadwick went on board the flagship of the squadron then in port, to report the loss of his vessel and the capture of the famous pirate, Basil, who then lay dying in the cabin of his vessel, while his crew were in irons below decks.

The news of the capture of the buccaneer chief, so long a terror on the seas, was received with joy by the commodore, who congratulated Captain Chadwick upon his own escape and his splendid prize, while he said that the gallant young sailor, Clifford, should receive full praise for his most valuable services, and be recommended to promotion to the command of a vessel, as he had shown himself so well capable of holding such a position.

Captain Chadwick mentioned to the old commodore that Clifford already held rank as a midshipman, and hoped to soon be afloat in command of a privateer; but the old officer cared nothing for privateer service, and said that the captain's young *protege* must be in the regular navy, and he would so present the case to the Government.

Then Captain Chadwick returned on board his own vessel, with orders to put her in dock on the morrow and fit her out at once for sea.

He entered his cabin on tip-toe, not wishing to disturb the wounded buccaneer; but the surgeon was not there, and a glance at the lounge on which had lain the form of the buccaneer was empty.

"Ah, he has dropped off suddenly, as Surgeon Carrol said he might."

"I will at once report his death to the commodore," and Captain Chadwick returned to the deck and said to the officer on watch:

"Dillingham, the buccaneer chief escaped the gallows after all."

"Is he dead, sir?"

"Certainly; did you not know it?"

"No, sir; Surgeon Carrol has not reported the fact to me, and he is in the cabin with him."

"Great Heaven, Dillingham, neither Surgeon Carrol or the buccaneer chief are in the cabin."

"Then they have escaped, Captain Chadwick," was the startling response.

At once the alarm was given, and a search revealed the fact that neither Buccaneer Basil or his surgeon were on board the schooner.

And more, it was found that they had made their escape out of one of the stern ports, by lowering themselves into the water by a rope, found there made fast to a ringbolt, and had thus swum ashore, for the distance was not over a couple of cables' length.

Upon the table beneath the lamp, which had been turned down low, was a scrap of paper, bearing the address in a bold hand:

"CAPTAIN CHESTER CHADWICK,
Commanding Pirate Prize,
"Red Scorpion."

Tearing open the paper Captain Chadwick read aloud:

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN:—Never trust a pirate, for their lives are made up of deceit.

"That clever youth Clifford Kane deceived me by showing me a dove with claws, when I expected to capture a merchant craft.

"As I saw that all was lost I took advantage of a slight wound to make believe it was fatal, and Surgeon Hugh Carrol helped me out in the deceit, as he knew that I had a fortune in gems upon my person, and I would share with him if he aided me.

"He did so most thoroughly, and we leave together with no hope of ever crossing your path again, though I do give you credit for having been most kind to me, a pirate.

"I am at present without a ship, or crew; but I am not one to despair and you will again hear of."

"BAZIL THE BUCCANEER."

To say that Captain Chadwick was in a rage would be to speak mildly, and yet he could blame no one, not even himself, for who would have believed that the chief had been playing so deep a game against death.

An alarm was at once sent out through the vessels in the harbor and the fleet, but the morning dawned and no sign of the fugitives could be found.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY.

SEPARATED from the pirate prize in the gale at night, and forced to scud for several hours, Clifford Kane found himself the next day nearer the port of M—, where he had made his home, than Boston, which port he had intended to make, and so he ran for it.

It was night when he entered the harbor of M—, and dropped anchor under the shadow of a cliff, around which flowed the waters of the bay into the inlet.

Upon that cliff stood his home, a small cabin that had a baleful history connected with it, for its former occupants had been murdered one night, by whom no one knew.

Seeking the port in their little sloop one day, the strange trio of Sea Gypsies, mother, son and daughter, had made their home in the Overlook Cabin, and a comfortable dwelling-place they had formed it into.

From there Clifford had gone upon his cruise to the Treasure Island, and from there one evening some weeks before, in the gloom of gathering night, Kate had been kidnapped and taken to the retreat of the smugglers.

Standing upon the cliff in the moonlight, watching the schooner run in, was a woman of queenly appearance and clad in black.

It was the wife of Basil the Buccaneer, she whose life had been so embittered, and who had been hiding from her outlaw husband for years.

Her strange costumes, her weird appearance, had caused her to become known to the good people of M— as Salina the Sorceress, and they stood in awe of her, too.

Now, as she saw the schooner sweep past the town, and head for the inlet, she said aloud:

"It is Clifford's vessel, and he returns to find his sister gone.

"Woe be unto Kenton Carr when I tell Clifford that I believe he is the kidnapper of my poor child.

"His having gone to sea in a fine armed vessel as a privateer captain will not save him.

"Yes, the schooner has dropped anchor and a boat is putting off for the shore, so he will soon know all."

She did not descend to the little pier to watch those who landed from the boat, but remained standing upon the cliff, while the voices of those approaching came to her ears.

Soon four persons stood before her.

One was the tall form of Clifford Kane, another was officer Harvey Lynn, the third was Mrs. Henshaw and the fourth was Kate.

One glance showed the woman that her kidnapped child was restored to her, and came back under her brother's care, and with a glad cry she sprang forward and infolded the young girl in her arms.

Then followed an affectionate greeting for Clifford, for the woman loved the two as though they were her own flesh and blood, and that they knew to the contrary she was not aware of.

With her once happy past buried, and Basil the Buccaneer her husband, she had only those two in the wide world to cling to, and they had become her heart's idols.

But she greeted Mrs. Henshaw warmly, and also Harvey Lynn, and then all went into the cabin, lamps were lighted and Clifford modestly

told the whole story until the capture of the pirate vessel, when he said:

"And now, mother, I must tell you that the one who picked up the boat of Kate and Mrs. Henshaw at sea was none other than Basil the Buccaneer.

The woman turned deadly pale, and seemed to gasp for breath; but at last said in a low, deeply-moved voice:

"You said that the captain of the pirate schooner was mortally wounded?"

"Yes, mother."

"And it was Basil the Buccaneer?"

"Yes, mother."

"He knew you, my child?" and she turned to Kate, who answered softly:

"Yes, mother, he did."

"And you, Clifford?"

"I had a talk with him before he died, mother, and I have messages from him to you for he said that though he had cruelly wronged you, he had ever loved you, and that when he died your miniature would go down into the sea with him."

"He said this?"

"Yes, mother, and more, he left to Kate and I the treasure which he said had been lost in his wrecked schooner, and which he said that you, or I, had in possession.

"He said that this was a freebooter's legacy to his children."

"And you—"

"Accepted it, and told him that the good use I made of it I hoped would atone for the red stains upon it."

"Well said! but are you sure he was mortally wounded?"

"So said the surgeon."

"He is a cunning man, my son!"

"Yes, mother, but lies wounded in the cabin of his own vessel, which Captain Chadwick has command of."

"Chester Chadwick?" quickly asked the woman.

"Yes, mother."

"He whose vessel you saved years ago?"

"The same, mother."

"Ah me! had I listened to his wooing in the long ago, and turned from the fascination of that devil Basil, how different had been my life.

"Chester Chadwick was all that was noble as a youth, and he loved me, and yet I listened to the tempter and the fiend, gave up the companion of my girlhood for the stranger, the buccaneer."

She had spoken to herself, seemingly unmindful of the presence of others, and then, with a start recovering herself, asked quickly:

"And you are sure Basil the Buccaneer has received his mortal wound, my son?"

"Yes mother, so he said, and so all believed, and ere this he may be dead."

"Thank God!" and so vehement, so in earnest were the two words that broke from the woman's lips that all started and could not but feel how bitter had become her hatred for the man whom once she had so dearly loved.

And then casting off all other feeling Mrs. Basil seemed to be anxious to entertain her guest, Mrs. Henshaw, and make her feel at home, and few who saw the little party gather around the supper table that night, would have believed so deep a shadow had fallen upon their lives only a short while before.

CHAPTER X.

PRIVATEER OR PIRATE.

NOT very far from where the pirate prize Red Scorpion had dropped anchor, lay a vessel which had attracted considerable observation of late.

She had been built and fitted out as an American privateer, her owner being, it was said, a distinguished naval officer on the retired list, he having lost a leg in the war of the Revolution.

He had an elegant home in M—, overlooking the seaport and town, and lived there in the luxury which his riches gave him, with his only child, a daughter, and a wild spendthrift of a nephew whose guardian he was, and whose inheritance he had in his keeping.

The commodore, for such was the rank he had held, was a man of great influence, and he had seen that war between England and the United States must come, sooner or later, so he had a trim schooner built, armed and thoroughly fitted out, it was said to place in command of her Clifford Kane, to whom his daughter, beautiful Creola Carr, and this same wild nephew, Kenton Carr, owed their lives, having capsized one day in a sail-boat near Overlook Cliff, and but for the young sailor promptly springing from the heights and swimming to

their rescue, while he bade his sister to follow in a boat, they would have been drowned.

But Clifford Kane was found to be supplied with a vessel, so the commodore had allowed his degenerate nephew, whose real wickedness was veiled from him, to take command of his schooner, for Kenton Carr had once been in the navy as a youth, and afterward had been skipper of several of his uncle's fine vessels.

This vessel now lay at anchor, preparing for sea with a haste which surprised many, for the rumors that war had really begun were just coming in, as in those days, seventy-five years ago, news traveled slowly.

The schooner was certainly a beauty, large, stanch, rakish as a yacht, with a vast sail-carrying capacity and armed most thoroughly.

The commodore, with sarcastic wit, when he knew who was to command her, had given her the name of the "Scapegrace," and there were those professing to understand the exact situation who asserted that the old sailor of seventy-six was willing to lose the schooner if he could get rid of his graceless nephew by so doing.

Be that as it may, Kenton Carr was certainly a good sailor and a fearless one, whatever his faults were, and he was fitting his vessel out with a haste that surprised those who did not know the exact situation.

Fond of his ease he had made his cabin a charming abiding-place, and upon the afternoon following the arrival of the Red Scorpion in port, he was seated in an easy-chair taking a rest when his first officer entered somewhat hastily.

Kenton Carr was certainly a fine-looking man, with a face that had to be closely studied to note the evil in it.

He had an indolent air about him, and was in appearance the polished, courtly man of the world, though his dissipations were beginning to tell upon him.

The officer who entered was a stout, sailor-like man of forty-five, with intensely red hair and beard, the latter reaching to his belt.

His eyes were black, which gave a strange contrast with his red hair, and he looked like a man to do and dare much.

Unknown to the good people of M—, the two had been friends for some years, or secret companions at least, a fact which would have been, if suspected, another thing against Kenton Carr, for his comrade, though he called himself an humble fisherman, and dwelt alone in a cot across the inlet from Overlook Cliff, the home of the sorceress and her children, was suspected of being a smuggler.

Whether his deeds in the past, or his red locks, had gained him the name, no one seemed to know; but to the people of M— he was known as Red Ralph Rogers.

Nor did the good townspeople suspect for an instant, or the old commodore either, when Kenton Carr went to Boston to take command of the schooner, that Red Ralph Rogers had preceded him and was to be an officer on board the privateer.

Had they known this, it would have given them further food for thought.

Now as Red Ralph entered the cabin, Kenton Carr asked, hastily:

"What is it, Ralph?"

"Enough for cause of worry, captain, for you noticed the pretty armed schooner that lay up above us this morning?"

"Yes, and she is as pretty as the Scapegrace."

"Well, she ought to be, for she is the Red Scorpion, Basil's craft."

"Not not the craft of Basil the Buccaneer?"

"Yes."

"Captured?"

"She was."

"And he?"

"Was supposed to be mortally wounded, and last night when the schooner dropped anchor in port he slipped out of the stern ports."

"And escaped?"

"Of course, for he is just the man to do it."

"It seems that the surgeon on his vessel played the pressed-into-piracy dodge, so he helped him, and they got away together."

"Well, he will again be heard of afloat; but who captured him?"

"There's the story, and it is cause for anxiety."

"How so?"

"Well, Captain Chadwick, it seems, got into a battle with a British sloop-of-war, and though badly crippled, escaped."

"But his vessel was so hard hit he had to desert her and take to his boats, and they were picked up by that young Wizard Sailor, the son of the Witch of Overlook, for you remember he

had gone off on a chartered schooner on a cruise?"

"Yes; but what else?"

"It's soon told, for Basil sighted the schooner, felt sure of a prize, so gave chase, and the Wizard Sailor, with Captain Chadwick's crew on board, set a trap for him, and simply Basil fell into it."

"The deuce!"

"Yes; and the town is ringing the praises of the Wizard Sailor."

"Is he here?" asked Kenton Carr, hastily.

"No; in a gale his schooner got separated from the prize, but he is expected every minute; but this is not all."

"More still?"

"Yes; for you remember when we found the girl had escaped from Smugglers' Retreat, and discovered Henshaw dead and his wife gone?"

"Of course I remember it, for was I not with you?"

"Well, we suspected the sorceress had aided her daughter to escape in some way; but the girl did it herself, and took Henshaw's wife with her."

"They were blown out to sea in their little boat, and were picked up by Basil."

"No?"

"Yes; and so the young Wizard Sailor rescued his sister—do you see?"

"Yes, curse it! of course I see, for I am not blind."

"Now the girl has been told by Henshaw's wife, who proved traitor to him evidently, just who her kidnappers are, and when her brother comes in and finds you are to command the privateer, why, this craft will never go to sea, and it will surprise me if you and I do not make the acquaintance of a rope's end, for that youth is a hero now, and can do as he pleases, you know."

"By Heaven! you are right."

"Quick! get the men aboard that are waiting, and we'll sail within two hours, for it will never do to have him come in and catch us here."

"We have not two-thirds of a crew yet, but that does not matter, we must go as soon as we can get away."

"Yes, for as you say it will not do to be caught here; but I have a plan to get a crew, captain."

"How?"

"They are pirates—Basil's men, in fact, and they are to be put on board a coaster and sent to the New York prison to-night, and they would make splendid fellows for us."

"Pirates! I should think so, Red Ralph, the very men, and we must have them," was the decided answer of the young privateer captain.

CHAPTER XI.

AT HOME.

THE pretty little seaport town of M— was greatly excited and elated, for honor had fallen upon two of its citizens.

In the first place Kenton Carr, a man whom everybody had regarded as a reckless spendthrift, had been one of the first to carry an American privateer to sea, and great things were expected of the fine craft, and the Commodore was congratulated upon the regeneration of his wild nephew, who had shown such an intense desire to get out upon the ocean to fight the British.

Then Red Ralph Rogers had disappeared from his accustomed haunts, a fact that the good people of M— looked upon with evident cause of congratulation.

Another citizen, known as the Wizard Sailor, and who as the son of Salina, the Sorceress, had been looked upon with considerable awe, had gone off on a coasting cruise in a small schooner, and had saved the lives of a shipwrecked cruiser's crew, who were found in their boats at sea.

With these he had cleverly deceived Basil, the Buccaneer, into his being a merchant craft, and renowned pirate, his vessel and his men.

And more, he had rescued his sister, and another lady captive who were on board Basil's vessel, having been kidnapped by the buccaneer.

For his services, it was said, that he was to be made a naval officer by the Government, and would soon go to sea in command of his own vessel, which at his personal expense he was having built and armed up in Maine.

The captured pirate schooner he had generously turned over to the Government, it was said.

Such were the rumors flying about M— a few days after the arrival of Clifford Kane in port in his shot-torn schooner.

The next day the little sloop belonging to the young Wizard Sailor had been seen to go out to sea, with a dozen seamen on board, and it was learned that Clifford Kane had sent his officers, and the men loaned by the cruiser's captain, to aid him work the schooner into port, to Boston, to await his coming.

It was also known that the Wizard Sailor was shipping a crew right from M—, securing the best young men and sailors in the port, and that when he received his full complement he would sail in the little schooner for the place where his own vessel was then being fitted out.

Under all these rumors the town of M— was almost wild with delight, and the mother, son and daughter, who had so long been regarded as a mysterious trio, and looked upon with awe, were now regarded as shining lights in the community.

And these stories quickly found the way to an elegant old mansion below the town, situated upon a lofty hill, and with grounds sloping down to the waters of the harbor.

This was Harborage Hall, the home of the old sailor, Commodore Carr, and his beautiful daughter, Creola.

They heard of the coming into port of a strange schooner, and soon after that Clifford had been the commander.

Not a word had the young sailor said of his cruise, or his exploits, but the news quickly came in from Boston, telling the whole story.

Then the Commodore and Creola had gotten into the family carriage, and driven away to Overlook Cliff.

Since his daughter and nephew had been saved by the prompt courage of Clifford, and his sister's aid, there had been a warm spot in the commodore's heart for all of the mysterious trio at Overlook Cliff.

What feeling had been in the heart of his lovely daughter she wisely kept concealed, for Clifford was but a poor sailor, an unknown waif as it were, who called himself in truth a Sea Gypsy.

The commodore and Creola found at Overlook Cabin the mother, her son and daughter and Mrs. Henshaw, for the sloop had already sailed for Boston with Harvey and Clarence Lynn on board, and the sailors loaned by Captain Chadwick.

The schooner was anchored under the cliff, in the inlet, with the five mutineers on board, who had expressed an earnest desire to serve under the young captain, and there were also on the vessel half a dozen young seamen of the town, whom Clifford had already shipped for his privateering cruise.

The commodore and Creola were warmly welcomed by all, and Kate was congratulated upon her rescue, when her story was told, and the old sailor spoke warm words of praise for Clifford on his daring exploits at sea.

But not a word was said to show that Basil the Buccaneer had ever been known before to the trio of Overlook.

That was a secret to be kept, Captain Chadwick alone knowing the true story.

In regard to her having been kidnapped, Kate had said that a strange man, evidently wearing a false beard and wig, had come to the cabin one afternoon, with a professed message from her brother, and thus had allayed any suspicion of harm.

He had seized her unawares, bound and gagged her, after which he had carried her to his boat and rowed away in the darkness down the harbor, passing her mother in her skiff, returning with her Saturday evening purchases from the town.

Out in the offing the skiff had been met by a smack, into the cabin of which she had been placed, and the little craft had run to a desolate, rocky point where the smugglers had a retreat.

There she had been left under the care of a smuggler, who also had another captive there, Mrs. Henshaw, whose sad story Kate would not tell.

"And you have no idea who your kidnappers were?" asked the commodore.

"They were both disguised, sir, so that I could not see their faces," was the evasive reply.

"And their motive?" asked the commodore who had not noted the evasive reply.

"To force my mother to pay a large ransom for me, sir."

"Ah, yes; and I am only sorry that your brave brother here cannot capture and hang the villains," the commodore said, and then came Kate's significant reply:

"He may, some time, sir."

It was not very hard to get Mrs. Henshaw to consent to remain at Overlook, and Clifford was glad to have her with his mother and sister while

he was away, and he urged them to take a house in the town for better security.

But this Mrs. Sweegan, for she had taken her pirate husband's middle name, would not listen to, preferring to remain in the isolated cottage upon the cliff.

So it was that Clifford sailed away in the little schooner, after two weeks' stay at home, carrying with him three-score gallant young seamen from M—, who were glad to follow the lead of the young "Sea Wizard," and after putting into Boston port for his two gallant officers, Harvey and Clarence Lynn, and the good men and true they had shipped for him, he would head for the Kennebec, where his vessel would be ready for him to hoist the Stars and Stripes above her decks.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CAPTAIN'S MASTER.

TERRIBLY anxious at what he had heard from his first officer, for so Red Ralph considered his position on board the schooner, Kenton Carr was vexed at the delay of the men coming off, so that he might set sail.

He kept a man aloft, watching the channel out to sea for any incoming vessel, and was determined to get up anchor the moment the schooner of Clifford Kane was reported in sight.

He would leave Red Ralph and his men ashore, for he could not afford to take the chances of losing his vessel and getting into trouble himself.

He well knew that if Kate had recognized him as her kidnapper, and her brother knew the fact, he would have his papers revoked at once by the commodore in charge of the squadron in those seas, and more, he would be brought to face the angry brother who was known to be a very dangerous foe.

But at last the boats were seen coming off with the extra stores and men, and Red Ralph soon stepped on deck.

"The schooner is not in sight," said Red Ralph.

"No, and it is well for you she is not, for I should have gone to sea the moment she was reported."

"And left me and the men?"

"Yes, for I would have left some one to tell you where to come and join me; but self-preservation is the first law of nature, you know."

"Yes, captain, and it is the law I am acting on; but it would have hardly done for you to desert me."

"Now when do you sail?"

"At once."

"Then I shall go on deck and give the necessary orders?"

"No, Red Ralph—"

"Hold! my name is Ralph Rogers now, captain."

"Well, I must tell you frankly that it will not do to make you my first officer, for there are men aboard who know you as Red Ralph the Smuggler."

"What do I care?"

"But I care; I will, however, make you my boatswain."

"Captain Kenton Carr, Privateersman, I thought you knew me better than attempt to play a deep game upon me."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean simply that while dwelling on Pine Point at M—, I was supposed to be a fisherman, while in reality I was secret chief of a band of smugglers."

"One night, when I was playing the gentleman in Boston, I saw you lose far beyond your ability to pay, at a gambling den, and I helped you out."

"More, we became allies in smuggling, and no one ever suspected the nephew of Commodore Kenton when he was cruising in his yacht, of running in smuggled booty."

"Why recall this?"

"You went beyond your means, you secretly hypothecated your fortune, held for you by your uncle, and you got large sums from smuggling."

"Then, recognizing the Sorceress of Overlook Cliff as the wife of Basil the Buccaneer, whose lieutenant I once was, I told you how we could kidnap the girl and make a large sum in ransom, for the woman must have pirate treasure hidden away."

"You kidnapped her and our little game failed, so the girl comes back with her brother and knows who were her kidnappers."

"I also know that your cousin Creola refused you, and to get her fortune you upset her purposely that day off Overlook."

"But you very nearly got drowned yourself,

and but for the young Wizard Sailor both of you would have been drowned.

"Her death would have killed her old father, and you would have been heir to all the Carr estates."

"Now, as a last venture, you have this schooner, and when we talked it over I told you I was to be first luff."

"Now, as one time naval officer, a gentleman born gone to the bad, as a pirate lieutenant and experienced as a coaster, there is no better man on a ship's deck than I am, though I do say so."

"Now you are ready for sea, and you coolly tell me that you will make me boatswain."

"Well, after all this talk, what are you going to do about it?"

"Simply tell you that I am to be your first officer, or I will proclaim myself captain, and as I shipped every man on board this schooner they will obey me, not you."

"Now, Kenton Carr, what do you say?"

"I am wholly in your power, so must yield."

"You should have done so gracefully and not forced me to make you yield under threats, for, I swear to you, if I had to hang myself, I would let them have me, if in no other way I could send you to the gallows, did you play me false."

"You own the schooner, or your uncle does, and have a right to command her; but I have a right to claim the berth of first officer, and you will find that my varied experience will help you."

"I do not doubt that, Ralph."

"As boatswain I certainly could not share the cabin with you, and more, when I shave off my beard and cut my hair, I will not look so much like a pirate as I now do."

"Now let me tell you that we have just fifty-six men all told on board, and we can, this very night, get half a hundred more, and they are Basil's buccaneers; but we must play a bold game to do it."

"I am ready."

"Ah! I feared you would not be; but let us get out of this harbor first, and then we will have nothing to fear, so go on deck, Captain Carr, and tell the men that I am your first luff."

"But I promised Burton the berth."

"What do I care? Simply tell him that I had a prior claim, and if he is not satisfied let him go ashore."

"He'll drop into second place, never fear, for he is as anxious to leave town as we are, I have learned."

"Why?"

"He is suspected of a forgery, and is to be arrested to-morrow, as I just hinted to him."

"All right, he must drop down to second officer; but we cannot be proud of our lieutenant, knowing him to be a forger."

"No more than he and the crew would be of their captain and first luff, did they know us as we really are."

Kenton Carr flushed under this shot and went on deck, where he quickly told officer Burton that Ralph Rogers was to be first lieutenant, he taking second place.

"Captain Carr, I do not understand this action, sir, and I protest," was the angry reply.

"Very well, sir, if you do not care to go as my second officer, I shall have to obey the orders sent me from the shore to arrest you and send you under a guard to the town jail, on a requisition—"

"No, no, Captain Carr, I did not refuse, sir, to be second officer, and I accept the position, with real pleasure, sir," replied Burton, now thoroughly alarmed, for he did not doubt but that such orders had come off for him.

"Then to your posts all!"

"First Officer Rogers, get up anchor and set sail at once, sir!" and Kenton Carr gave the order in a tone that was heard by all on the ship, so the question was settled and Red Ralph had triumphed.

CHAPTER XIII.

RED RALPH'S BOLD GAME.

THE reason that the new privateer, Scapegrace, got out of Boston Harbor and to sea, without meeting Clifford Kane's schooner coming in, is already known to the reader, as the young sailor had gone to the port of M— instead.

It was when they had dropped Boston Height astern that the captain and his first officer drew a breath of relief, and putting the schooner under the charge of officer Burton, the two pals, rather than friends, adjourned to the cabin for supper.

They occupied the cabin together, the other officers having the ward-room, so that, after dismissing his steward, the captain could talk at ease with Ralph Rogers.

"We were lucky not to meet the schooner, Rogers," he said, as the two sat at the table smoking after finishing their supper.

"Yes, for that young fellow is not to be fooled with, and he would have signaled the Castle to turn us back, or sent a vessel in chase, and if we had run for it, then we would have been outlawed."

"But as it is we sail under special papers, and so are all right."

"Yes; but your game to get Basil's crew, what is that?"

"Ah, yes."

"I told you that they were to be sent to New York?"

"Why?"

"Because the fleet here expect to sail daily on some special mission, and do not care to be hampered with prisoners, and the schooner Red Scorpion is in the docks, so cannot care for them."

"Why not send them to the Government prison or the town jail?"

"The former is being enlarged, and its prisoners are temporarily held in the town jail, so that it is crowded, and so they are to be sent by the packet sailing to-morrow night to New York."

"Well?"

"She is a large packet schooner, and this trip is to take no passengers but the prisoners, forty-seven in all."

"Yes."

"She has a crew of ten men, is fast, and yet she can be overhauled."

"Do you mean that I shall overhaul the packet and take those men off?"

"Yes."

"And be outlawed at once by the Government?"

"Oh, no, we must not do it in that way."

"How, then?"

"I'll explain my idea to you exactly."

"I wish that you would."

"Well, those pirate prisoners are going to New York, and some of them will be hanged, and others sent to prison for life in ball and chain."

"Yes."

"If we rescue them, then they will be our devoted slaves, and make the best of sailors."

"Granted."

"We will have then a splendid craft, well equipped, heavily armed, and manned by a hundred desperate fighters."

"I understand."

"With such means we must win riches."

"True; but what will the present crew say to being allied with pirates?"

"I selected those men, and from what I hinted, I do not believe there is one of them that does not believe that we intend to cruise for gold, rather than for patriotism, and they are in for anything."

"Say that we get the pirate crew, what report can I make?"

"Make none, for why should you?"

"The men may report it when we return to port."

"Now see here, captain, we have just been too anxious to get out of port to wish to enter it again."

"You can capture prizes, and send the man who hypothecated your fortune for you the amount you owe him, and this will make you solid with your uncle, who will then never know what you did."

"You can also send in word of your numerous captures of prizes, to keep on the good side of the old man, and so square yourself with Government, should any detrimental reports go in, you see."

"Yes, all this can be done; but how to get hold of this pirate crew I cannot see."

"I'll tell you at once."

"The packet sails to-morrow night, and she goes and comes through Long Island Sound."

"This gives you twenty-four hours start of her, and the wind is fair for you now, and may not be for her to-morrow night, and that will give you more time."

"We can run to an inlet I know of in the Sound, and I can metamorphose this schooner into a temporary brig rig, or which will pass muster as such at night."

"There are in one or two boxes I brought out a lot of striped shirts and red caps, and any quantity of false beards, for I prepared for this emergency, and more, I have a black flag all ready also."

"A black flag?"

"Yes, for we are to play pirate, you know, run down upon the schooner, bring her to, release her pirate crew, and go on our way."

"We will be reported as an ally of Basil, perhaps as Basil himself, as he escaped, you know, and no one will ever suspect us of being the privateer Scapegrace."

"It is a splendid idea, if it is not found out."

"Bah! if it should be why you can simply say that you needed a crew and knew these pirates to be the very men, and if it comes to the worst, you can hang all that are left, to please the Government."

"After they have served me faithfully."

"After I had served you faithfully you intended to play me a shabby trick, and I am not so sure that you would not now cut my throat."

"But you save the devils from the gallows, and give them a chance to die on your decks as American patriots."

"If they don't die thus—after getting the chance, then they must not blame you if the Government demands that they be strung up at the yard-arm."

"Is not my reasoning good?"

"It is the perfection of deviltry, but, of course, good reasoning."

"Now, I am going to take your plot and carry it out, Red Ralph."

"There you go again, calling a respectable lieutenant of an honest privateer, Red Ralph."

"I beg pardon, Rogers, I will not offend again."

"No, for I will at once send for the ship's barber and be metamorphosed from Red Ralph, smuggler, to Ralph Rogers of the American Privateer Scapegrace."

And those who saw the officer on the deck an hour after would never have recognized him under the remarkable change that had come upon him by the shaving off of his beard and cutting off of his long red curls.

CHAPTER XIV.

BAZIL'S BUCCANEERS.

It was just as the cunning smuggler, Red Ralph had said—there was to be a change of the pirate prisoners from Boston to New York.

Red Ralph had been a gentleman, and nothing delighted him more than in going up to the city now and then and enjoying himself as a man about town.

He had rooms there, for his smuggling had enriched him, and he dressed like an exquisite.

His frock-coat, patent-leather shoes, high hat and glasses, with an immaculate shirt-front and diamond pin in his gay scarf changed him completely.

Then, too, his long beard and hair were carefully dressed for the occasion, and as he spent his money freely, he was a general favorite, known to his associates as Ralph Royal, which was often changed to "Royal Ralph."

In this way, meeting naval and army officers at a club, he had gleaned the intelligence as to the removal of the prisoners, and his fertile brain and daring nature at once determined upon a rescue, and adding them to the crew of the Scapegrace.

Into an inlet on Long Island, not far from Sag Harbor, the Scapegrace ran, and began to be changed to carry out the bold plot of her first officer.

All during the day they worked upon her, sending two guns below, to cut her battery down, and hereby add to the deception, so that she could not be reported as having thirteen guns, her complement.

Her tall topmasts were replaced by shorter ones, her long, needle-like bowsprit had another one put in its place, and the rig of a schooner gave place to that of a brig.

How she would sail under the change was a question, but her speed was so great under her real rig that her captain had little fear on that score.

The crew were changed into a bearded, villainous-looking crowd, in striped shirts and red caps, and then the disguised vessel moved to a position just after nightfall to meet the coming packet.

The wind had changed, and coming from the westward the packet would have to beat on her way to New York, so it was not expected she would be along very soon.

It was sunset of the next day when a sail was sighted, and Officer Rogers, who had noted her well in port, said that it was the packet schooner.

She came along on easy tacks, running close inshore, on the port tack, little dreaming of danger, when out from the shelter of the timber-fringed inlet glided the privateer.

She bent gracefully to the breeze, which was blowing about eight knots, and was gliding along at a pace which showed that the change

did not altered her speed to any very great extent.

So like an apparition she had glided out of the shadowy shore, that she was not sighted by those on the packet schooner until she was only a quarter of a mile away.

Then, quick as a flash the schooner fell off, placing the breeze abeam and shot away in flight.

But those on board the Scapegrace saw that though the packet was known to be a very fleet sailer, their own vessel not only held her own, but in spite of the obstacles she labored under, she was creeping up.

Captain Carr did not wish to fire a gun then, for he knew not what cruiser might be lurking in the Sound to come to the scene, upon hearing the report.

So he held on, while the packet, finding that her pursuer was gaining, put away directly before the wind to run back the way she had come, and which was her best point of sailing.

On this course she held the pursuer, or if the Scapegrace gained it was very slowly.

Seeing this Kenton Carr asked Rogers what was best to be done.

"Bring her to with your guns, end the matter and run for it, for we can renew our old rig out at sea."

So the black flag was run up and the glare of the gun forward revealed it to those on the packet, and told them what they had to expect.

The gun did not bring the packet to, so a shot was fired directly over her decks.

But not until a dozen had struck her did the plucky captain of the packet come to.

Down rushed the disguised vessel, rounding to not far distant, and then Ralph Rogers hailed:

"Ahoy, the schooner!"

"Ho, the pirate brig!" came the sullen response.

"Is that the Boston and New York packet schooner Whirlwind?"

"Yes."

"You have a number of passengers on board?"

"Not one."

"You have below decks in irons forty men pirate prisoners of Basil, the Buccaneer's crew."

No answer was returned, and Rogers called out:

"Answer, or I will send a broadside into you."

"Yes, they are here."

"I want them, so send them aboard in your boats."

"Why don't you send after them?"

"I prefer to have you send them aboard."

"Knock their irons off, put them in your boats, with one of your men in each boat to carry it back."

"We cannot manage them if we take their irons off."

"They shall not harm you, nor will we do you any damage if you obey."

"Are you Captain Basil, the Buccaneer, who escaped the other night?"

"Yes."

"I thought so, and you have done quick work of it to get afloat and retake your crew."

"I want no compliments, but actions."

"Do as I order you, or I will fire upon you."

"Ay, ay, sir, I have given orders for the release of your bloody pirates."

In a short while after, the hum of voices was heard upon the deck of the packet, and then came a wild yell, rather than a cheer, as the pirates learned the situation.

Soon after one, then another and a third boat put off from the schooner's side full of men, and they pulled swiftly toward the disguised vessel.

As the first man stepped on deck he asked quickly:

"Where is our glorious captain?"

"In the cabin, sir; but are you an officer?"

"Yes, the second luff of the Red Scorpion, and the only one who was not killed, now that Captain Basil escaped."

"I am Officer Harold."

"I am glad to meet you; but are all your men here?"

"Yes, sir, that boat now coming alongside has the rest of us."

"All right, order the boats back again, for I suppose the schooner sent a man in each?"

"Yes, sir," and the order was given, the boats pulling slowly back to the schooner.

Then Rogers hailed again:

"Ho, the Whirlwind!"

"Ahoy the gentleman pirate, for I bow to

you, sir, as you have not harmed my vessel or crew."

"You can go on your way, and simply say that Basil the Buccaneer is afloat again," and Ralph Rogers gave orders to get the Scapegrace under way and head for the open sea.

The pirates meanwhile were buddled amidships, hardly able to realize their escape, and congratulating each other upon their rescue from death.

Officer Harold was led to the cabin by Ralph Rogers and there he was told the situation as it was, and that the pirates had been rescued to fight on an American privateer.

"I shall give you a berth, Mr. Harold, as a junior officer, and your men can go to duty as the other seamen; but if there are any who refuse, I must know it now."

"None will refuse, sir, and all are ready for duty I assure you, except the half dozen who are more or less seriously wounded."

"For my part, sir, and for the men, I thank you, Captain Carr."

The officer then went on deck, joined his men amidships and told them why they had been rescued, and that by serving faithfully as privateersmen they would stand a chance of being pardoned as pirates.

They were, or some of them were, sorry that they did not get the chance to sail under a lawless flag, but glad to have escaped as they had, they readily agreed to serve the man who had rescued them.

And so the next day, changed back to her real rig, and with a full crew on board, the Scapegrace started upon her cruise as a privateer.

But with such a commander and crew it was a question in the minds of a few on board whether she would long remain under the Stars and Stripes.

CHAPTER XV.

A PIRATE AT LARGE.

SURGEON HUGH CARROL of the Red Scorpion had half told the truth when he said that he was a pirate from force of circumstances he could not avoid.

He had been taken on board a prize, and as he had shown himself a skillful surgeon he had been offered a berth as such on board the Red Scorpion and had accepted, intending to make his escape when opportunity offered.

But plenty of plunder, good quarters and rations, against which he had only poverty and hard luck to remember in the past, and the chance of escaping if the pirate was taken on the plea that he was forced into piracy, had caused him to remain and bury any conscientious scruples he might have for what he did.

So when the chief was placed in his hands, and supposed to be dying from the wound given him by Clifford Kane in their personal encounter, Surgeon Carrol soon saw it was by no means fatal, and in truth not serious.

But he helped the chief along in his "dying act," so well played, and when the schooner dropped anchor in Boston port the two had all their arrangements made to escape.

Two life-buoys had been secured by the surgeon, and at the proper moment, when no one was in the cabin, or likely to come for some time, the two slipped down the rope out of the cabin stern-port, and swam noiselessly away for the shore.

Basil had been in the town recently several times, and had an agent there, so knew just where to go.

They reached a deserted part of the shore, landed, and keeping in the shadow of the streets, made their way toward a shop which was kept by the buccaneer's agent for the disposal of piratical plunder.

That worthy was seated in his shop, which was a curiosity in its way, for second-hand goods of every description could be found there, when the two men slipped into the door, their clothes dripping wet.

He started up, expecting customers, and put on his most benign smile, which Basil cut short with the remark:

"Come, Samuel Slick, get us into a spare room, and bring us dry clothes, for we are wet and wretched, as you see."

"Captain Basil!" and Mr. Samuel Slick stood with mouth wide open, in amazement.

"Do you wish to betray me, Slick, and hang with me?" sternly said the chief.

"No, oh, no! I'll close my shop at once," and he sprung to the door, closed it with bolt and bar, and then turned to his two unexpected visitors, and asked:

"Can I believe my eyes, captain?"

"Tell me how I can convince you and I'll

do so, if it's to let you feel the weight of my hand."

"No, oh, no; but then I had not expected to see you."

"But I am here and you must take care of me; yes, and of my friend."

"Now take us to a room, bring us a drink of your best brandy first, then dry clothing, with supper and cigars to follow, and then I can talk and you can make some money."

The shopman at once took up his lamp and led the way through a rear door into a hallway.

He ascended a pair of steps and halted at what appeared to be a window in an upper hall.

But it opened at his touch, and they stepped into a narrow passage leading through a door, into a large and comfortably furnished room beyond.

"This is a secret room, captain, and you and your friend are welcome as my guests."

"The fire is all ready to light in the hearth, as you see, and will not be unpleasant, so set it going while I bring you a decanter of brandy, and tell my wife to prepare supper for you."

"And the dry clothes, Sam, for I just got up from a dying bed, and am not the strongest in the world."

"I'll get them at once, captain," and the man disappeared, while the two fugitives set about making themselves comfortable by lighting the fire.

By the time it was blazing cheerfully Slick returned with a large bundle of wearing apparel and a decanter of brandy and glasses.

"Mrs. Slick is at work for you, captain, and will have supper before an hour, and in the mean time make yourselves contented."

This the two proceeded to do in a free-and-easy way, and after they had driven the cold out with brandy, put on dry clothing, and eaten a very tempting supper, they lighted their cigars and were in a humor to talk.

So it was that Mr. Samuel Slick, "Second-Hand Dealer," as his sign had it, heard the story of the capture of the Red Scorpion and the escape of her chief by his clever ruse of pretending to be a dying man.

"It's well you were able to play the game, captain, for you would have been yard-armed sure."

"Without any manner of doubt, Sam; but how do we stand financially?"

"You have money due you on the last two sales."

"So I supposed, but how much?"

"Five thousand five hundred."

"It should have been more, but we'll not quarrel about that, for as my crew are prisoners I have no one to divide with but my surgeon here, so we'll go halves, as I owe him my life, and you can keep the odd five hundred for taking care of us."

"Thank you, captain, it will come in handy, for my profits are small and risks great."

"You mean your risks are small and your profits great, Sam; but I shall want more money, and I have some gems with me for you to value."

"All right, captain, I have friends who can raise any sum on good collateral."

"You old fraud, you have the money yourself, you mean, for you are a rich man."

"But I must have another craft and get a crew, so give me on this bag of gems just fifteen thousand dollars," and Captain Basil took from his belt a small buckskin bag of precious stones.

"I can hardly give so much, captain," said Slick, after glancing over the gems.

"See here, Slick, every one of these gems has the stain of a human life upon it, and do you suppose I have been a pirate for a score of years not to know the real value of precious stones?"

"I ask you for the sum I want, and give you what you will get twenty thousand for, so as you refuse I will go elsewhere to-morrow."

"I do not refuse, captain, and you shall have the sum you wish."

"Good! and give it to me in Boston bank-notes, which I can carry with me, with what gold we can stow away between us."

"Then too you must rig us up disguises which our master, Satan, would not recognize us under, for we must get away from here."

"I can do that, captain, and no mistake."

"What do you say to turning farmers, for I can get you a horse, wagon and all, and the captain there might play old woman, and you grandpa."

"The very thing, and we can drive to some seaport where you can charter a craft to carry us up to Maine."

"Going down East, captain?"

"Yes, while I was in a dying condition I

heard talk of a schooner which was about ready then to go to sea, and I thought she would do me; but you must get me a crew, and at once, if you pay bounty, and send them after me in a vessel you charter for the purpose.

"You must get me men who ship blindly, for I want only those who will obey orders, and never care what color the flag is that I raise above my decks."

"I understand, captain, and I can book you in a few days just the men you wish; but I may have to pay bounty."

"Do so, if necessary, but don't rob me, Sam, for I am down now."

"No man is down who has money."

"What does a few thousands amount to?"

"But don't be a leech, and hold on because you can, and circumstances make me a victim."

"If you think, Captain Basil, that I would rob you, you had better—"

"Bah! I don't think, Sam, I know, for I put a spy on you and know that you got just double for a lot of goods which you gave me one-fifth of."

"Now, if I cut throats for gold, I wish to get the money."

"If you have to pay a bounty do so, but don't charge me with a hundred dollars and give the man twenty-five."

"At another time I would say nothing, but just now I do."

"I'll do right by you, captain."

"Do so, and you'll get other chances to add to your wealth, for in spite of your old second-hand curiosity-shop here, I know that you are one of the richest men in the town, and all from selling smuggled and pirated goods."

"Now, we wish to get away to-morrow evening, and we'll drive to Salem, and from there can take a small coaster for the Kennebec."

"And the men?"

"Begin at once to get them charter a schooner to-morrow, and send them to John's Bay on the Maine Coast to await my coming, or if I arrive first I will remain until they put in an appearance."

"How many, captain, did you say?"

"From eighty to a hundred, but nothing less."

"Now begin work to-night, by a tour around the sailors' taverns, for I am tired and wish to rest, and thus dismissed Mr. Slick left the room and the two fugitives were soon after sleeping the sleep of men who have no consciences to keep them awake."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SEA GYPSY SETS SAIL.

THE shipyard where Clifford Kane was having his vessel built upon the Kennebec, was securely located, and the builders, Messrs Kip & Deering were known to be the most expert men who ever laid a keel.

They had been delighted with the model which had been furnished by Clifford Kane, and had told him that it would prove to be as a vessel all that he could wish.

A skillful wood cutter he had carved out his hull, spars and everything about the craft just as he wished it, and the builders had followed his orders and plans to the letter and they felt proud of their work.

Some years before an English frigate had been wrecked on the Maine Coast, and as wreckers the builders had recovered its magnificent battery, and from it the schooner Clifford Kane had been armed.

The finishing touches to the beautiful vessel, which had been named the Sea Gypsy, had just been put on when a small craft sailed up the Kennebec and ran alongside of the pier at the shipyard of Messrs Kip & Deering.

There were upon the little sloop but a dozen men, and two of these landed and went at once to the office of the builders.

Mr. Kip was there, and one of the two strangers introduced himself as Lieutenant Lynn, and stated that he came as the envoy of Captain Clifford Kane.

"I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Clifford's first officer, Mr. Lynn, who came here with him at the time he ordered his vessel," said Mr. Kip.

"My brother that was, sir, for there are two of us serving under Captain Kane; but I am here, Mr. Kip, to pay you for the schooner, the balance due, I mean, and to take her to Boston, as Captain Kane is detained getting his cruising papers arranged to his satisfaction."

"I am sorry Captain Kane could not come, Mr. Lynn, for I had a confession to make to him, and a great favor to ask."

"Any favor I can grant for him, Mr. Kip, it will give me pleasure to do, sir."

"No, I will not ask it now, sir; but when do you wish the vessel?"

"At once, if ready, sir."

"I promised her upon the thirteenth of this month, and she was all ready on the evening of the twelfth."

"Ah! you are prompt indeed, sir; but now let me know just what is due according to your account."

Mr. Kip turned to his books and after figuring awhile said:

"He paid me in advance three thousand five hundred dollars, and the schooner's contract price was to be fifteen thousand, with ten thousand more for her armament and all complete."

"Yes, that is the sum he named, sir, so I am to pay you, twenty-one thousand five hundred?"

"Exactly, sir."

The officer took off his belt and counted out the money, less a couple of thousands, which his companion took from his belt, making the sum complete.

Then Mr. Kip led the way to the basin where the schooner lay, with two watchmen on board of her, and both officers uttered an expression of delight and admiration at her beauty.

Going on board they went from stern to fore-castle, below decks, into the cabin and even aloft, and Clarence Lynn said with enthusiasm:

"Mr. Kip, this is the most beautiful craft I ever beheld, and no other vessel is like her that floats the sea."

"I am glad the captain had her painted snow-white, with this girdle of crimson around her hull."

"Her battery too is just what she needs, and she is a beauty, sir, a perfect sea witch and I am proud of her."

"As we are, sir, of our work, and if she does not show her heels to any vessel now upon the seas I will be wonderfully mistaken."

After some further conversation the crew of the sloop, excepting two men, were sent for, and were loud in their praise as they went on board the splendid craft.

"I have a light crew to run her to Boston with, but the captain has ninety more good tars there," cried Clarence Lynn.

Then the anchor was gotten up, sail set, and with the little sloop following, the Sea Gypsy headed down the Kennebec.

Once past Seguin Island, and half an hour after nightfall, she hove to and the sloop came alongside.

A transfer of some stores was then made, the sloop was scuttled, and taking the two men on board the schooner, Clarence Lynn left the little craft to settle lower and lower, and to sink into the ocean depths.

Then the Sea Gypsy squared away upon her course, and under a fair wind soon disappeared in the distance.

The next morning two vessels stood into the mouth of the Kennebec and headed up the river.

One was a small schooner, and her decks were crowded with men.

The other was a rakish-looking sloop, having the appearance of a gentleman's yacht.

And her decks also were crowded with men.

The wind was blowing a seven-knot breeze, and the little sloop led the way up the river to the shipyard of Messrs. Kip & Deering.

Those two gentlemen had noted the approach of the vessels and met the party as they landed upon the pier, for Mr. Deering, absent the day before, had returned that morning.

As a tall form sprang ashore from the sloop and advanced toward Messrs. Kip & Deering, the senior partner called out:

"Why, Captain Kane, you here, and without your vessel?"

"I have come for my vessel, Mr. Kip, and I hope you have her ready for me, as you promised me you would," and the young sailor shook hands with the two shipbuilders, while Mr. Kip asked in a dazed way:

"Ready for you? Why, yes; but did you not meet her?"

"Meet her? How could I?"

"But she sailed yesterday afternoon."

"Sailed? On a trial trip?"

"No, for Boston."

"It is strange, Mr. Kip, when I was to come here for her."

"So I thought, sir, but when you sent your lieutenant, Clarence Lynn, after her, I could not but let her go."

"Lieutenant Clarence Lynn is with me here, sir, and this gentleman is Lieutenant Harvey Lynn, my first officer," and Clifford Kane referred to Harvey Lynn who had just come ashore from the schooner.

"Lieutenant Clarence Lynn is with you, sir?" gasped Mr. Kip.

Without answering Clifford turned and hailed the schooner, ordering Lieutenant Lynn to at once join him ashore.

"Now, sir, you see that the officer you say came for my vessel is here, with me."

"I see, yes; but my God who was it you sent after her?"

"No one, I have come myself."

"My dear Captain Kane, a sloop came here yesterday with two officers and a dozen men on board."

"One of these officers introduced himself as Lieutenant Clarence Lynn, and said that he came from you to get the schooner, as you were detained in Boston getting your papers made out."

"He paid me the amount due in bank notes, twenty one thousand five hundred dollars, and I at once turned the schooner over to him, as he seemed anxious to get away, and he sailed within the hour, his sloop following in the wake of the Sea Gypsy."

"Mr. Kip, describe that man, yes, both of them."

"The one who had little to say was a stoutly formed man of thirty, dressed in an undress uniform, and the one who claimed to be Clarence Lynn was older, and had a splendid physique and strangely handsome face, while he was dressed also in uniform."

"Had he gray hair on either temple, and a mustache that was streaked with silver, and very long?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then, Mr. Kip, you have sold my vessel to Basil, the Buccaneer, whom I captured five weeks ago, and who with his surgeon, the man you describe as being with him, escaped just one month ago to-day."

"I have sold the vessel to Basil, the Buccaneer? My God!" and the poor builder seemed fairly staggered at the news he heard from the lips of Clifford Kane.

CHAPTER XVII.

SHADOWED AT SEA.

THAT Basil the Buccaneer was a man in emergencies the reader has seen, and he possessed a bold genius for wickedness.

He had, while supposed to be lying in an almost comatose state from his wound, in the cabin of the schooner, heard Captain Chadwick and his officers talking of Clifford Kane as a hero, and that he would win a great name for himself, once he got afloat in the vessel he was building down in the Kennebec.

From various things said the chief learned that the new vessel was to be built upon a special model, and was expected to be a wonder in fleetness, while she was to be turned out from the builder's hands complete in every detail.

So it was that the daring buccaneer set sail from Salem, whither he and Surgeon Carrol had gone in disguise as farmers, and the little sloop, with its crew of a dozen men, was headed for the Kennebec.

Surgeon Carrol had discovered that Clifford's two officers were brothers, and that their name was Lynn, and thus armed with a sure data to go upon, and the money to pay cash for the schooner, the bold buccaneer decided to make the move to secure the young sailor's vessel.

He did think some of waiting for the crew which Samuel Slick was to secure for him, and sail into the Kennebec and boldly cut out the craft.

But he might have to wait too long, as every moment was precious, for Clifford Kane might go after his vessel at any time.

Then, too, there was a fort at the mouth of the river, and it was being strengthened against cruisers from England entering during the war then opening.

So Basil decided that it was best to sacrifice his money, and boldly played his game on Kip & Deering and won.

He had not expected that the sum would be so much, so had to draw upon his surgeon for a part, as has been seen; but once the beautiful craft was in his possession he cared for nothing, and after scuttling the little sloop he had chartered, he set sail for John's Bay to await the coming of the schooner with his mongrel crew of cut-throats.

The capture of his schooner by Clifford Kane, his inability to find out where his wife was, and his narrow escape from death had embittered the buccaneer captain more than ever, and he had a longing to one day capture the young sailor for revenge, and force from him the truth about the treasure he had lost on his schooner that had been wrecked, for he did not believe that it was lost.

As the schooner felt the breeze and bounded

away on her course to John's Bay, Captain Basil was loud in his praise of the beautiful craft, and felt that he again held his destinies in his own hands.

He offered Surgeon Carrol the position of first officer, but that cunning man of medicine, recalling that life was uncertain at best, and especially the life of a pirate and how he had escaped before, decided to remain as surgeon, knowing that he would still be the best of friends with his captain, and if taken could once more try the same bold game to escape the yard-arm.

John's Bay was reached after a very rapid run, and the Sea Gypsy went into hiding there to await the coming of her crew.

It was some days before a vessel was sighted coming in, and she carried the signal agreed upon at her fore, it could be seen when she drew near enough.

An hour after Captain Basil received the commanding officer in his cabin.

He was a young man, once a ship captain of Portland who had tried to add to his income by smuggling, and having been caught in the act, had fled to sea before the mast.

A good sailor he certainly was, and a bold, bad man as well, the very one to hold the position of first officer under Basil, the Buccaneer, who at once appointed him to that berth, greatly to his delight.

Officer Ramsey had brought as fair a lot of villains with him as ever Basil could wish to command, and Samuel Slick had told no untruth when he said in his letter:

"You will find every identical man of them a born devil, and if the truth were known I guess all of them are in hiding from justice and half of them at least have been pirates, so the good work you have in hand to do will not be new to them."

"I am delighted with the men you have brought me, Officer Ramsey—how many in all?"

"Ninety, sir; and if you have not already appointed your other officers, there are several I could point out as well worthy of the places."

"We will look them over, and then set them to work to-morrow."

"I shall remain here until they are drilled at the guns and got used to the ship, for when I get my anchor up now it will be to go at once to work upon the high seas."

"Now, about the schooner you came in?"

"She is to return, sir, with her own crew."

"I was wise, then, to head you off in my gig and bring you aboard, and not let the schooner's crew see this vessel."

"Now return to the schooner and bring the men off in her boats, which can then be taken back, and you can let the skipper start back at once upon his return to Boston."

"You had no difficulty getting out?"

"None, sir."

"Is there any news?"

"I have the latest papers for you, sir, and you will find that your escape created the greatest excitement."

"Doubtless."

"And I learned that your captor, whom they call the Wizard Sailor, started with his crew to get his vessel from the Kennebec."

The chief laughed, and said:

"Well, as I have her here he will have to hunt another craft, and he can never match this one unless he builds another, which will take a long time."

"There is not a craft afloat, Officer Ramsey, that is the match for this one."

"I am glad to hear it, Captain Basil," was the reply, and Officer Ramsey rowed back to the craft that had brought him there, and which was anchored down the bay a mile distant, and the men were sent to the Sea Gypsy in the boats of the chartered vessel, and after they were sent back to her she got up anchor and headed away upon her return.

It was ten days before the buccaneer chief felt that he could go to sea in safety, for he was determined to have his crew know their captain and their vessel.

He drilled them himself at the guns, and in all other duties, and discovered that Samuel Slick was right in his surmise that half of them had been pirates, for many of them well understood the handling of the battery.

At last, two weeks after his having so cleverly gotten possession of the beautiful craft, he got up anchor and stood out to sea one pleasant afternoon.

A calm came on when he was a league offshore, a fog followed which at dawn was blown away by a storm, and loud rung a hail from aloft:

"Sail, ho! sail, ho!"

The chief had just come on deck, when he heard the storm coming on, for he wished to test his vessel in a gale and a rough sea.

There came the stranger, seen in the gray of early morning coming out of John's Bay, from where he had come the night before, and looking like a phantom ship, for she was snow-white from hull to topmast.

"My God! it is the counterpart of this craft!" cried Basil, with more feeling than he cared to show, and the men were at once called to quarters to fight what appeared to be a very shadow of their own schooner.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SEA SHADOWER.

CAPTAIN BASIL, with all of his intelligence, was a man full of superstitions.

In this latter respect his crew were like him to a man, for men who are criminals are all more or less given to superstition.

The beholding therefore of the counterpart of the Sea Gypsy coming out of John's Bay, which he had left the night before, almost upset the nerves of the pirate leader.

To have seen any other craft coming out of there would have been a surprise, after his having been there for two weeks; but to see a vessel the exact likeness of his own was more than a surprise.

Captain Basil had heard often that John's Bay was said to be haunted, by the coast fishermen.

He knew that a British frigate had been wrecked there years before, and every soul on board had been lost.

It was in fact the very frigate whose guns he then had on board the schooner, with many other things in her equipment which the wreckers had taken from the ill-fated craft.

All seamen gave the bay generally a wide berth, and many were the tales told of phantom craft seen in those waters.

The men looked uneasy, for here was a craft seen in broad glare of day, and from hull to topmast white as snow.

She was coming down upon them at a flying pace, carrying full mainsail, jib and foresail.

The Sea Gypsy was quickly gotten under the same canvas, and as the sea was rough and wind increasing, Captain Basil was very glad of a chance to keep out of firing upon the stranger.

He saw that the men had gone to their guns with reluctance, and he was anxious to have them get more experience under fire, and in handling the battery, than with a foe his equal certainly.

So he gave orders to put the schooner away in flight, adding so that the men could hear:

"We will now have a chance, Mr. Ramsey, of seeing just what the schooner can do in the way of speed."

"Yes, sir," said that officer greatly relieved at not having to fight a vessel that he half believed was an apparition.

So the Sea Gypsy was put away in flight, at the same time that her flag was sent up to the peak.

Almost at the same moment a flag rose to the peak of the stranger, and it too was a black flag.

Up to the fore the buccaneer then sent his own private fighting flag, a black field with a red arm and hand clasping a golden cutlass.

Hardly had it fluttered out to the breeze when the chief, who, with his officers held their glasses upon the stranger, uttered the words:

"My God! he has set the same flag!"

This made a sensation, and the officers were told not to let the men know what was done on the stranger, as with the naked eye it could not be seen what flag she had set.

There was fully two miles, if not more, dividing the two vessels, and a beautiful sight they were as they sailed along over the rough seas and fairly flew along under the pressure of sail they carried.

When eight bells struck and the watch was changed, the quartermasters at the wheel went forward and of course the story was at once told about the flags set by the stranger, for they had heard all.

And the men grew more and more nervous as the day wore on.

The wind steadily increasing, Captain Basil at last was forced to shorten sail, so he ordered the foresail reefed down, and a single reef put in the mainsail.

With the movements to obey the order on the pirate, the same were observed upon the Shadower, and by the time the sails had been reefed the work was finished upon the pursuing vessel.

It was seen that the Shadower, as those on

the pirate now spoke of their pursuer, did not gain an inch nor lose any whatever.

She just held her own without loss or gain, and as the seas struck the pirate they also struck her and were met in the same splendid manner.

The afternoon came, and still the gale increased, while the seas grew higher and higher, and at last Basil, the Buccaneer was forced to give the order to reef down the mainsail.

The same was as promptly done upon the pursuer.

As the day waned the storm increased almost to a hurricane, and the foresail was lowered on the buccaneer and the jib gave place to a fore-staysail reefed down.

The same maneuvers exactly were executed upon the Shadower, and the pirate crew became more and more nervous.

At last the tempest became so severe that Basil, the Buccaneer said:

"Ramsey, she is the best sea boat I ever saw, but we must lay to, or these seas will drown us."

"Yes, sir, but yonder craft stands the seas as well as we."

"Curse yonder craft."

"I fear, sir, we are under a curse to be shadowed thus; but if we lay to will she not come on down to us?"

"We will see, and if she holds on we will get under way again if we founder!"

"I hope she'll lay to, also, sir, for I do not care to have her nearer at night than she is."

"Nor I; but bring the Gypsy to."

This was done, and the obedient and splendid vessel a moment after lay under her topsail, riding the waves most gallantly.

"By Heaven she has done the same!" cried the buccaneer chief when he saw that his shadower was also laying to.

Night came on gradually, and the sea yet ran in tremendous waves, the wind still blew almost a hurricane.

As darkness deepened and began to shut the Shadower out from sight, an exclamation from Surgeon Carrol, who held a glass upon the stranger, caused all eyes to once more glance toward the craft which was such a mystery to them.

About her, weirdly glaring through the darkness, hovered a baleful, greenish light, or halo.

It was not bright, it was as though a light were seen through a mist, a veil; but it revealed very indistinctly the Shadower laying to, and caused her to appear indeed like a ghostly apparition of a vessel; their own vessel, in fact.

Basil, the Buccaneer, was more worried than he wished to show.

He tried to make light of it with the remark:

"Well, she shows us where she is, and cannot see us, so we will slip away in the darkness, and if she follows us to-morrow, she must fight, that is all."

But officers and men shook their heads in silence, when the chief went down to his supper, accompanied by his surgeon, who shared his cabin with him.

"What do you think of it, Carrol?" said the chief, after the two had eaten their supper, almost in dead silence.

"I cannot make her out, Captain Basil."

"Nor I."

"There is no vessel the counterpart of this one afloat?"

"No real vessel, no, for that boy had this one built from his own model, and she was just ready for him, as you know, when I got possession of her."

"Well that craft, sir, is a perfect likeness, that is certain."

"Yes, and she neither gains or loses a ship's length, while she copies our every movement. It is like watching one's own movements in a mirror to see her."

"It is indeed, sir."

Basil the Buccaneer arose from the table and glanced out of the stern port.

There lay the weird craft, two miles away and with the baleful glare hovering about her, and which gave the crew an idea that she was not of earthly origin.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN VAIN.

WHEN Captain Basil returned to the deck he still saw the baleful light that marked the position of the weird schooner.

The men were crouching down under the bulwarks, out of the fierce wind and driving spray, and he noted, as he walked forward that they were talking in subdued tones, like those deeply impressed at their position.

His officers, too, were uneasy, even those who

were off duty not having turned in, but remaining on deck, as though to watch the strange Shadower.

As the hours passed on and the tempest still raged, Captain Basil decided to get again under way and slip away from his pursuer in the darkness.

"That light reveals her to us, Ramsey, but she certainly cannot see us, as I have ordered not a light shall be shown."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, we will just slip away from her, and if ever I sight another craft like her, I'll never let her get within a couple of leagues of us."

"It would be well, sir."

"I believe if it had not blown too hard to carry more sail we could have run away from her."

"We might have done so, Captain Basil."

"Which means, Ramsey, that we might not have done so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, get the men up and we'll go ahead once more, under reefed mainsail and fore-staysail alone, for that will drive us as fast as we dare go."

"Yes, sir, and on which course?"

"Give her a full on the port tack, for that will carry us away from her."

"Ay, ay, sir," and the orders were given by the chief officer in a low tone.

The men, only too glad to run away from the mysterious stranger, obeyed orders noiselessly and promptly.

They seemed to feel that even at that distance, and amid the roaring waves and howling of the wind, the stranger might catch the sound of a creaking block.

But as the buccaneer craft swung off on her course once more, her weird, spectral counter-part, or shadower, with the baleful glare still hovering about her, did the same, to the horror of the outlaw crew.

A groan seemed to run through the crowded deck, for how could mortal eyes see the Sea Gypsy in the darkness, and still follow in her wake?

Captain Basil did not know what to say or do. The man who had risked death a thousand times, whose whole life was a wretched blot, whose hands were red with the blood of his fellow-men, and whose iron nerve had been always the admiration of his men, now felt a chill creeping over him, a cold sweat breaking out upon his forehead that threatened to unman him.

He was brought face to face with the supernatural, something he could not account for or explain.

In his desperation he would have gone back and fought the Shadower, even in that wild sea and wind.

But he knew that not a man would go to the guns at his order to do so.

They might have gone to fight a craft double their size, but not to fire upon the Shadower in their wake.

They were well drilled, and a brave lot, he believed; but he wished that he had had a chance to thrust them under fire, to let them see him in deadly action, and feel the perfect confidence in him that his men in the past always had.

But now he had to face a danger not seemingly tangible, and he could not run from it.

The wild sea, the fierce wind made it terrible for the schooner when under way.

If he could only scud before it, then it would not be so bad.

He dared not lay to again, for then would the Shadower do the same and be near him when dawn came once more.

"If the stranger was not to leeward of him he would scud, but with the Shadower where he was it would carry him down upon him, and he was too near already."

In his quandary the chief stood clinging to the taffrail, for he could not move about.

His beautiful vessel was plunging wildly, and threatening to pitch her sticks out of her.

She would keel over at a frightful angle, and yet she had a little sail as she dared carry, unless she could scud.

Not a man would dare go aloft to house topmasts and thus relieve her a little of the weight of the spars.

So there was nothing to do for it but hold on. "This is frightful, Ramsey, and I am almost tempted to lay to again."

"Why not scud, sir?"

"And run down upon yonder craft?"

"She might follow suit, sir, and scud too."

"By Heaven I have half a mind to try it."

"If she does not, you can lay to, sir."

"Yes, I will do it."

"Put her away before the hurricane, Mr

Ramsey, and we will see what our Shadower will do.

"If he runs, all right, and if we cannot stand a little canvas, we can strip her to bare poles."

"Yes, sir," and the men were startled by the order that would bring them nearer to the Shadower.

They hesitated and officer Ramsey called out: "It is only to see what our Shadower will do, lads."

This relieved their minds, and a minute after the bows of the schooner fell off until they were pointed down the gale, and she went driving along at a frightful pace, while huge seas rushed on astern as though to hurl themselves upon her and sink her forever from sight.

"See, captain, see!"

It was Surgeon Carrol who uttered the cry, and he pointed to the baleful light that marked the position of the Shadower.

She, too, had changed her course and was scudding under the same sail carried by the Sea Gypsy.

It was a relief to see the Shadower fly before them, though in any case she had simply followed their lead.

"We must strip her to bare poles, Ramsey," cried the chief, and it was done.

Then came the words from the surgeon, who never took his glass off the stranger:

"Our Shadower has done the same, sir, for she also has stripped to bare poles."

And thus the two white schooners, looking like huge sea ghosts of departed vessels, held on for several hours, when the wind began to slowly hulk and the sea to become less wild.

Sail was set upon the schooner again, and just before dawn, as the gale had tired itself out and dropped to a six-knot breeze, the Sea Gypsy was put under clouds of canvas and once more began her flight.

The Shadower followed suit, as though obeying the order issuing from the lips of Basil the Buccaneer.

And there she hung, still the same distance away, with the same canvas set as had the Sea Gypsy, and once more following in her wake.

The greenish haze faded from about her as day dawned, and as the sun rose the wind died utterly out and a calm fell upon the sea.

And there, with her graceful hull rolling upon the swells, her snow-white sails flapping in the listless air, just as lay the Sea Gypsy, the Shadower could be seen, still the same distance away.

Not a soul was visible upon her decks, the black field flag with its red arm and hand clasping the golden cutlass, hung limp at the foretop, and the sable ensign of the pirate was at her peak, also lifeless.

In vain had the buccaneer craft sought to elude her mysterious pursuer, and as Basil the Buccaneer sat in his cabin gazing out upon his Sea Shadower, his face haggard and eyes sunken, he said, with a groan:

"My God! I am a haunted man."

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIRST SHOT.

As though the wind had utterly exhausted itself in its fury the night before, the dearest of calms followed, and all day long the two white vessels lay upon the sea, which not a ripple disturbed, in strange contrast to its anger.

The pirates were ill at ease, and kept their eyes almost constantly upon their mysterious foe, if such they could call her.

The officers paced the quarter-deck, glass in hand, and also watched the stranger.

Not a sign of life was visible on board except under strange circumstances.

The high bulwarks of the Sea Gypsy hid her crew from sight, and even her officers were hardly visible.

So it might be with the other vessel, and Captain Basil sent an officer aloft with a glass to view the decks of his enemy.

As he stepped upon the bulwarks a form was visible in the same place upon the Shadower.

The officer ascended the ratlines, and at the same pace the form on the Shadower did the same.

But a thrill went through the pirate crew at beholding the strange form clad in white.

The officer reached the main cross-trees, and stood there, clinging with his arm around a stay and his glass leveled at the Shadower.

The white form did the same, his glass being turned upon the buccaneer.

The pirate officer grew uneasy under this espionage, and what he beheld in broad daylight.

"A shadow ship and a shadow crew!" cried the pirate, in dismay. After a moment's study of the white vessel he descended to the deck.

The other kept pace with him, and disappeared from sight as he did.

"Well, Taunton, what did you see?" asked the chief.

"You saw the white form, sir?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, on the quarter-deck, as you are all here, I saw other forms in white, with men forward. Captain Basil, yonder craft reflects us like a looking-glass."

Basil made no reply but turned away and entered the cabin.

There he paced to and fro, and even in his strong face the strain was beginning to tell upon him.

At dinner he ate but little, as also did the surgeon, while the other officers and the men hardly touched their food.

Toward evening there was a prospect of a breeze and all hailed it with joy.

The motion would be such a relief to the dead calm about them.

Darkness would come, and then what would follow?

As the sun touched the horizon the wind began to ripple the waters and Captain Basil came out of his cabin.

"Mr. Ramsey, clear that pivot-gun forward, train it upon yonder craft and let her have a shot, for it will reach her!"

He spoke sternly and the officer gave the order, but, not a man moved to obey.

"Gunner, did you hear the order?" roared Basil, his eyes aflame.

"Ay, ay, sir, but I cannot fire upon a sea ghost," came the answer.

With a fierce imprecation, Basil drew a pistol from his belt and shot him dead.

A cry of terror went up from the crew, while the chief roared:

"Now man that gun!"

Not a man moved and Surgeon Carrol whispered:

"Don't ask it of them, sir, for it is dangerous."

"I shall fire the gun myself, you cowards. Here, Ramsey, Taunton, Carrol, aid me!"

The officers obeyed; the gun was charged, swung round to cover the Shadower, and Basil himself sighted the piece and applied the port fire.

The discharge shook the schooner from stem to stern and caused her to lurch slightly.

The shot flew onward and seemed, to those who held glasses, to strike the strange craft fairly amidships; but, not a sound of crashing timbers was heard nor cries of men in agony; and, just then, from a pivot-gun mounted as was the one on the Sea Gypsy, came a great white puff of smoke.

No sound of the discharge was heard, no whistling shot came near—only the puff of smoke, that was all.

Basil saw that it impressed the crew the more; it was but the act on board his vessel repeated—a shadow shot, it seemed to be.

Then he called out savagely:

"Throw that body into the sea, and to your posts all!"

The gunner's body was tossed overboard, and a cry broke from the lips of Surgeon Carrol, who was still watching the Shadower through his glass.

"What is it, sir?"

"They threw a white-robed form overboard also, Captain Basil," was the startling response.

"Quick! crowd this craft with every stitch of canvas aloft and aloft that will draw a capful of wind! Here comes the breeze. We can get twelve knots out of it, and run away from that fellow at last!"

"Captain Basil!"

"Yes, Ramsey."

"The breeze has passed the stranger, sir. He has all the sail set we have, and is setting more as we are doing."

"Well?"

"He does not move, sir."

"Great Heavens! You are right. In Satan's name, what can that craft be?"

"Heaven only knows, sir. We are feeling the wind now, sir, and move ahead lively."

"Yes, and our Shadow is moving now that we do, and in chase," almost groaned the buccaneer chief.

Twilight had fallen now upon the sea, and the two vessels were distinctly visible to each other, the Shadower with the same baleful glare about her as on the night before.

She did not gain, she did not lose, but held her own—no more, no less.

Wave a red lantern three times in a circle, sir, Ramsey."

The order was obeyed, and soon after came the words:

"The Shadower responds, sir."

"Try a green light now!"

This was done, and as before, the mysterious vessel responded to the signal.

Not a soul on board would turn in for the night, and the strain was beginning to tell upon all, until some of the men began to envy the dead gunner.

"He has solved the mystery, Tom has," said the boatswain, and all agreed with him.

Toward midnight a haze crept over the sea, and soon after a cry came from a hundred throats in chorus.

It was a cry of joy, for the Shadower had disappeared.

On sped the Sea Gypsy, at once changing her course, and her crew held their breath in dread.

The hours dragged slowly along, and at last dawn appeared, but, nowhere in sight was the Sea Shadower.

CHAPTER XXI.

SEEN FROM OVERLOOK CLIFF.

THE war with England was a decided fact. British cruisers harried the American shores from Maine to the Mississippi, and battles at sea had aroused the whole country to a pitch of enthusiastic defense of their land.

If crushed by England in this war, then the war of the Revolution had been for nothing, and Concord, Lexington, Bunker Hill had been fought in vain.

But news came in after many months had passed that the American cruisers were proving themselves more than a match for those of Great Britain.

Then two American privateers were also winning a name, and the townspeople of M— were most enthusiastic over the many prizes sent in by the young Wizard Sailor, who had, after all, secured a vessel and gone to sea.

That he had no inferior craft was proven by his captures, and that he was a gallant and daring commander was known from the fact that he had fought several foes his superior in guns and men, and sent them in as prizes to the Government.

Not a word came from him, more than through his prizes, and these were wont to appear at anchor in M— Harbor in the mornings, the crews in irons, the Stars and Stripes hoisted above the British ensign, and a note stating that the vessel was—

"A prize of the United States Privateer Sea Gypsy,
"CLIFFORD KANE,
"Midshipman Commanding."

Thus far not a prize had come in, that any one had heard of, taken by the privateer which had sailed under the command of Captain Kenton Carr.

His uncle had not had a word from him, and the only rumor regarding his vessel was to the effect that three of his crew had deserted when becalmed off a southern port by swimming ashore, and had reported his vessel in her lawless act of having, in disguise, brought to the packet schooner from Boston to New York and taken from her, by force of arms, the prisoners in irons from the vessel of Basil the Buccaneer.

They had also reported that Captain Kenton Carr, under the influence of his first lieutenant, a man once known as Red Ralph, had not devoted himself to the capture of British prizes alone, but would run from every cruiser and take any unarmed vessel that crossed his path no matter what the flag she carried.

Not wishing to be hanged as pirates some day in the near future, the men had deserted at the risk of their lives, and making their way to Boston had told their story to the commandant.

Commodore Carr was notified, and had a talk with the men, and when he returned home he had said to Creola:

"My child, your cousin Kenton has turned gentleman pirate, and the sooner he is hanged at the yard-arm the better. Let us never refer to him again."

Ugly rumors were also coming in of the red deeds of Basil the Buccaneer.

It had become known how he got a vessel again, and that his craft was as fleet as a bird, and it was said that she was constantly hovering in the path of merchant vessels and pillaging them, while her cruel commander had become more bitter and merciless than ever.

At Harborage Hall matters went quietly on, Creola reading to her father every night what news the papers contained, and in the afternoon

going for a drive with him to Overlook Cliff, for their outings generally ended there.

In fact, Creola began to think that her father was falling in love again, and with the sad-faced, lonely woman who had once been known as the smuggler's wife, and who still made her home at Overlook.

And there was another male visitor to the Overlook Cottage now and then.

One day the schooner Red Scorpion, Captain Chester Chadwick commanding, had come into port badly crippled, and towing a prize she had taken in a large British schooner-of-war.

The battle had been a desperate one, and Captain Chadwick had been twice badly wounded.

While his vessel was to undergo repairs, he was taken to the town inn in M—, and among his first visitors was Mrs. Sweegan, one time known as the Sorceress, and who had known him in the long ago.

She, Mrs. Henshaw and Kate had proven his devoted nurses, and when the gallant captain was able to go out again, he was wont to extend his walks to Overlook.

One day he had blurted out in his blunt way:

"Celine, I dare not tell you I love you, because you are still a wife; but, I shall go to sea, as soon as my vessel is ready for me, hunt down Basil, and shall make you a widow. That done, I shall come back and marry you."

From this remark it may be seen that the captain had never gotten over his first love, and that Celine Chetwyn, as she had been known in her girlhood, had sadly repented her act in marrying Basil, a pirate, and casting off Chester Chadwick, there was no doubt.

Of course the captain, and commodore, too—for they were old friends, and often met at Overlook—talked of the career of Clifford Kane, and wondered at his never showing himself in port.

Kate was the one who always discovered his prizes anchored off the inlet, and reported them to the authorities, who took them in charge.

"He still remains a midshipman, when, if he came into port, he would find here a captain's commission awaiting him," the commodore said, and all wondered why he remained away.

So had nearly a year gone by, and one day vessels coming in reported having seen the white schooner of Basil, the Buccaneer.

In fact, the next afternoon he appeared boldly off the port of M—, and seemed about to run in, boldly flying his black flag, when, suddenly, he put about and stood seaward with all haste.

Then, coming around a headland was visible the cause of the pirate's flight—a snow-white schooner, the very counterpart of the other, and with exactly the same sail set as had the buccaneer!

At the fore was a like flag to the one on the pirate, and from the peak waved the sable ensign.

Away went the two vessels, under full sail, until at nightfall, to the watchers from Overlook Cliff they appeared like white specks upon the ocean.

"A pirate chasing a pirate, and may they destroy each other," said the commodore, who was there with Creola.

"Yes, and one was Basil, the Buccaneer; but the other?" Captain Chadwick responded.

No one knew, and the scene was indeed a strange one and a mystery.

CHAPTER XXII.

A STRANGE FATALITY.

WHEN Basil, the Buccaneer, had stood in toward the port of M—, he had in his fiendish nature, knowing the town to be defenseless, intended to fire upon it, to add greater terror thereby to his name.

But suddenly a cry came from aloft that fairly frightened him in its earnestness.

"Sail, ho! sail, ho! it is our Shadower!"

Then the Sea Gypsy was put about, and crowding on all sail, went flying seaward, shaping her course down the coast.

The buccaneers had not seen the Sea Shadower, since they had lost her that night in the mist, nearly a year before, and now they were as much startled as then.

About the same distance divided them as then, and though Basil sought again to open fire, his men, though now wholly under his influence in all else, refused to man a gun.

And so the chase went on until the sun went down.

There was a moon near its second quarter, and the light revealed the pursuer and pursued.

The moon set, but the stars revealed the Shadower, again surrounded by the baleful glare.

The morning dawned, but there was no difference in the position of the two vessels.

The wind was fresh, and fair for their course, and they reeled off ten knots to the hour.

Night again fell, and a second day dawned; but still no difference in the position of the two vessels.

The Sea Shadower was not to be shaken off, but followed as persistently as a shadow.

So several days and nights went by and the chase had been from northern to southern latitudes.

Captain Basil was heading for the Bahamas, hoping to shake his relentless shadower off there among the islands, or that a tornado would come, and in its fury he could throw him off his wake.

The men had become almost unnerved, and the officers little better.

As for Buccaneer Basil he was pale, haggard, and really suffered.

Again he felt, more truly than before, that he was a haunted man, that the specter of his crimes was pursuing him.

One afternoon, when nearing the Bahama range of islands, the skies suddenly became overcast with inky clouds, causing it to appear as though night had already fallen.

The pirate still carried his press of sail, for not a stitch had been taken in during the long run from the north.

The Shadower carried the same canvas and still held her position.

As night in earnest settled down, the wind, which had held good in the long run, suddenly lulled.

It was the same precursor of a terrible storm.

The two vessels now lay upon the sea, and canvas was rapidly taken in, and only the smallest sail set to meet the hurricane.

The moon was at its full, yet did not cast a glimmer of light through the inky clouds that now seemed to sweep the seas as they came along.

There lay the Shadower, like a ghost upon the black background, and with the same weird light about her.

Suddenly she disappeared, for the tornado had enveloped her.

A few moments after and with thrilling winds and roaring waters, *el tornado* had struck the pirate.

The schooner met the shock bravely, bent low to its prey and then bounded away like a frightened monster.

As she drove along all eyes were turned astern and a yell of terror broke from four-score men.

There, now within a few cables' length away, came the Sea Shadower.

She was under the same sail that the pirate carried and coming right in her wake.

Extra canvas, which the buccaneer craft could ill-bear was spread, and she went tearing along like mad.

But the same canvas was set upon the pursuer and she came on at the same mad pace.

So the hours passed, one, two, three, until the tornado seemed as if it would never spend its fury.

Then a vivid, blinding flash of lightning rent the inky clouds, and revealed ahead of the pirate, almost under her very bows, a wall of white foam.

It was a reef, and beyond were visible the rocky walls of an island.

In mad terror Basil gave the order to go about; but the tornado held the schooner too firmly in its grasp for it to easily obey, and she staggered on directly upon her death, while the pirates beheld the Sea Shadower wear round and stand away from the fatal end that was before them.

Another bound, and, as she was beginning to beat her way around, a huge wave seized the splendid craft and hurled her upon the reef with a force that split her from stem to stern, tore her sticks out of her and swept her shrieking crew away to death against the cliffs not far beyond.

And the Sea Shadower, the relentless craft which had driven the buccaneer to his doom?

She wore around in the teeth of the tornado, and plunging, reeling though she did, she edged away from the danger and swept around the island, guided by the lightning's glare.

Then, under the lee of the island she beat close in, her anchors were let fall and she rode out the tempest in comparatively quiet waters.

After midnight the winds went down, and when day dawned a gentle breeze only was blowing and the mad sea was resting after its madness.

As the sun arose two boats were lowered from the white schooner, filled with men, and they

pulled with strong stroke around the island, passed in through an opening in the reef where the pirate schooner had struck and gone to pieces, and headed for a break in the rocky wall of the island.

One boat led, and in her stern sat Clifford Kane, his face stern now, but calm.

"He seemed to know the waters, and turning, as he sprung ashore in a small inlet called out:

"What a strange fatality, Harvey, for this is the very island which I sought in our cruise in the little schooner, and where Basil's treasure is buried.

"I recognize it now, and here has his ship met destruction, here has he met his death. We shadowed him to his doom."

"It is indeed a strange fatality, Captain Kane, and believing that we were a specter shadower, as surely they did, you have your revenge in the horror they suffered in their last moments, if revenge you wished," responded Harvey Lynn.

"Yes, I had reason for revenge against that man; but I forgive him now," was the low reply.

The rocks and the beach were strewn with dead bodies and wreckage, and the schooner was ordered around, other boats sent ashore and the pirates were buried.

Search was made for the body of Basil, and it was found, his right hand still clasping his cutlass, his left clinging to his belt of precious jewels, while his face wore a look of horror.

"I shall bury him in the grave from which I take his treasure, his legacy to my sister and myself.

"My mother and I buried the treasure there long ago, and its resting-place will be a grave for the freebooter," said Clifford.

Into the treasure-pit the body of Basil the Buccaneer was laid to rest, while the treasure was removed on board the Sea Shadower, where, most prized among all was an iron box taken from the wrecked vessel on the Cuban coast, of which Clifford and his sister Kate were the sole survivors.

This box held papers and other things proving that Clifford Kane's father was the younger son of a noble family, who had, by the death of his elder brothers without heirs, come into the title and estates, and was on his way to England with his wife, an American, when they were lost by the vessel being driven off of her course and wrecked.

"I may be the heir, and doubtless am, but I am an American, heart and soul, so when I will claim my parentage I will resign the title and estates," said Clifford to Harvey and Clarence Lynn, who were in the cabin looking over the contents of the box with him.

After a couple of days spent on the island, when it was found that not a soul of the pirate crew had escaped, the white schooner sailed for home, Clifford Kane remarking:

"A year ago I made a solemn vow not to drop anchor in an American port until I had captured or slain Basil the Buccaneer.

"Now that my oath has been kept, we will sail for Overlook Cliff. Then there is one other that I will hunt down."

"You refer to Kenton Carr?"

"Yes, Harvey."

"Sail, ho!"

The lookout had sighted a vessel at anchor in a small cove, for the schooner was running along close inshore on the Carolina Coast.

"Head her into the cove, Mr. Lynn, for that craft is the very one I seek," said Clifford Kane, and the schooner was run into the little bay, and her coming was not seen on board the stranger until she was within half a mile of her.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A COMPACT UNTO DEATH.

THAT the schooner in the basin had not expected a surprise was as certain as that there was great surprise among her crew when the white schooner was sighted.

Her boats were ashore getting water, and not half of her crew were on board.

So up to her peak went the Stars and Stripes, and in response the American colors were shown on the white schooner.

Then the signal was given for the captain of the schooner at anchor to come on board the white vessel.

Soon after a boat left the side of the stranger, and when it came alongside of the Shadower, a man wearing the uniform of a United States naval captain was shown into the cabin, where Clifford Kane awaited his coming.

"Captain Kenton Carr, I believe?"

"My God! you are Clifford Sweegan?"

"My name, sir, is Clifford Kane, though I was known to you as Clifford Sweegan, and my rank is that of a midshipman in the navy of the United States, at present commanding a vessel-of-war."

"And I, sir, am a captain, and if you care to see me, you will find me upon my vessel."

"Hold, sir! You are a pirate, as I well know, and I have special orders to hunt you down— Stay, you are not my prisoner, and you shall have every chance, I assure you. As soon as you hear what I have to say, you can return on board your vessel, and when you are ready to, come out and fight me, ship against ship, if you care to do so.

"I, sir, have just driven to his doom Basil the Buccaneer. He wronged one whom I have known as my mother; he sought to make me a pirate, and last he went to the Kennebec and got possession of a vessel which I had built there.

"Fortunately the foreman of the ship-builders had been discharged; but he had my model and secretly duplicated the vessel in every particular, a fact known to my builders only the day before I arrived to find my vessel gone.

"They were glad to arm her for me, as I was to buy her, and so I sailed in chase of Basil the Buccaneer and drove him to his doom.

"I knew his superstitious nature, and haunted him day and night until I lost him in a fog. But we met again at last, and I had my revenge.

"I know of your career.

"You are a pirate, not a privateer, and I will fight you to the death. You kidnapped my sister, you sought to take the life of my cousin, you squandered your inheritance and then turned outlaw.

"I will not let those who love you know your evil career; but I shall give you combat, vessel against vessel, crew against crew, man against man, asking no mercy, receiving no mercy, and sparing none.

"It must be a battle to the death, until one of our vessels go down, and if it be yours, then I will have freed the seas of a monster.

"If it be mine, then your career of crime can go on until it end at the yard-arm.

"Now, sir, go on board your vessel, which is a trifle larger than mine, carries two more guns, and must have fully an equal crew.

"If you do not come out to attack me within three hours, I will come in and attack you.

"You know my terms, Kenton Carr. Do you agree to them?"

"I do," and the man wheeled and left the cabin.

He rowed back to his schooner, on board of which the boats had been recalled from the shore by a gun, and at once preparations were begun for a combat, while the white schooner, which Clifford had also named the Sea Gypsy, stood out of the bay, her drums beating to quarters.

"Ralph, yonder craft is commanded by the Wizard Sailor, and it is to be a battle to the death between us," said Carr, as he entered his cabin, followed by his officer.

"So be it, and we will win though he is a dangerous man to fight. The wind is fair, and with night coming on if we get worsted we can run for it," replied the daring lieutenant.

"Very well; get the craft in fighting trim, and we'll stand out and fight him, as soon as darkness comes on."

Just at sunset the outlaw craft stood away from the anchorage, her men at their guns, as she headed out of the little bay.

The Sea Gypsy drew off until she got a good offing, returning no fire of the other until she had ample sea room, when she sailed straight down upon the pirate, firing with great rapidity and doing terrible execution.

For an hour the battle raged, the firing on Carr's craft ceasing several times and signals being waved; but, as Clifford Kane paid no heed to either cries or signals, but kept up his awful cannonade, his enemy would again open and the combat would be renewed.

At last the foremast of the black schooner went down, and she became a wreck; but the guns of the white craft did not cease their deadly rain. Soon all the top-hammer of the foe was shot away, and she lay a complete wreck upon the waters.

Kenton Carr lay dying upon her decks, but Red Ralph with the devil roused in him, now fought on, shooting or cutting down any man who cried for mercy, until at last the sinking, shot-riddled craft with a sudden lurch went down beneath the waters, while the Sea Gypsy, crippled badly, with many dead and wounded upon her decks, sailed serenely on her way northward, a victor and an avenger.

Clifford Kane had shadowed his foe to their death.

CONCLUSION.

THE arrival of the Sea Gypsy in the port of M— some two weeks after her battle with Kenton Carr's pirate schooner, was an event.

She came in crippled, partially shot-scarred, and with two-score wounded men, while her crew had been sadly thinned by death.

But she was welcome, and the hero midshipman who commanded her had honors showered upon him.

Only Harvey and Clarence Lynn, besides himself, knew what the craft was that the young captain had so savagely fought to the death. So the secret was safe. It was reported that Kenton Carr's schooner had been sunk in action with a British craft—that was the rumor long after.

With Basil dead, his wife was willing to listen to the pleadings of Captain Chester Chadwick, and after the war she became Mrs. Chadwick, forever burying her past life and the name of Sorceress.

Harvey Lynn won and wedded the beautiful Kate, who, like her brother, relinquished all claim to their English inheritance, her fortune being the legacy of the freebooter, Basil.

As for Clifford Kane, he won a name that will long live in romance as well as history, and what he valued more highly, he won the heart and hand of beautiful Creola Carr, and found a haven for life in Harborage Hall, where the old commodore still lived, and after the war enjoyed being addressed by his young son-in-law by the honorary title of Admiral.

THE END.

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BEADLE AND ADAMS, Publishers,
98 William Street, New York.